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Nº 6

June
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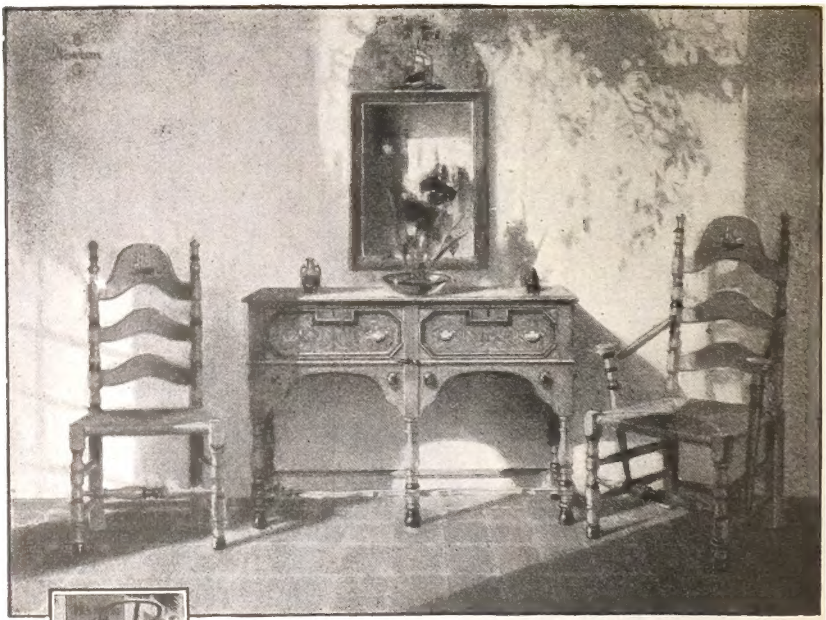

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VOLUME I
Number 6

JUNE
1925

THE GOLDEN BOOK MAGAZINE

OF FICTION AND TRUE STORIES THAT WILL LIVE

Edited by HENRY WYSHAM LANIER

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Some Persons of Importance

The apple tree never asks the beech how he shall grow, nor the lion the horse how he shall take his prey. WILLIAM BLAKE.

IT'S SMALL wonder that the infinite variations of human personality should have become the chief concern of modern story-writers and dramatists who are in earnest. For it is perpetually a matter for amazement to observe how inexorably human individuality expresses itself—whether it's in a man's books, or his music, or the great business he's built up, or even the railroad system which he actively manages, or the religion he founds.

Of course, this was not always the great writer's main preoccupation. In Aeschylus' mightiest drama we have merely a man defying a god. Prometheus has no individuality, in the modern sense: he is the man-type expressing humanity's woes under the tyranny of Zeus. The messengers of the latter are stark attributes, Might and Force. Contrast this "hero" with Bernard Shaw's "Marchbanks" in *Candida*, or one of Henry James's men, where each action or thought is intricately traced back to its peculiar emotional spring, in the effort to build up an individual grouping of characteristics: we have discovered as new a world as the scientific botanist, precisely identifying plant species and families, or the chemist, substituting exact observation for the guesses of ancient and medieval times.

Obviously, we moderns have decided that the study of human character is inexhaustible; that within the broad "types" of the most expert classification each personality is unique; and that to other humans nothing is quite so fascinating as a special individuality expressing itself in actions, thoughts or feelings amid recognizable people or natural conditions.

The very word *personality* tells something of this evolution. The wise philologist informs us that in Roman times *persona* meant an actor's mask—something through which something sounded (*per—sonare*). Yet it has taken added significance, generation after generation, until to us it means on the contrary the basic, essential qualities that make up the man's very self. And it is the basis of all worth-while fiction.

◆

Superficially it might seem that the novelist or story-writer is too much absorbed in the characters he is studying to give readers any great amount of himself in his work.

But, as suggested, one's personality is inescapable. Fromentin and John Lafarge have pointed out most stimulatingly how the results of ten painters' depicting a given landscape will be ten utterly different paintings—each picture depending on the artist's ancestors, his education, his individual being, which must see what belongs to it in any given scene. Just so the writer. The place to read the true biography of that elusive inner man of any great author is in his writings. If you have any sensitiveness, if you are tuned to receive what he had,—that is the one sending-station from which to get it. Compared with this, external statements about when he was born, and where he was educated, and how he worked and lived and loved and played are mostly "static."

◆

All of which brings us back to where we started (though you, patient Reader, didn't know it)—which happened to be a re-reading of W. J. Locke, and of a very pleasant intimate account of him by Coningsby Dawson. The latter but confirmed a sense of

(*Continued on page 6*)

An old-time Standard

It requires a business with a high and steadfast standard to manufacture any article—but especially such dainty, perishable things as chocolates—and keep the high quality always the same for eighty-three years.

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(*Continued from page 4*)

pleasant relationship with a most likable person (high enough praise at that, for any writing-about-writing!).

The "flavor" is what I personally get from Thomas A. Janvier, from Arthur Sherburne Hardy, from Robert Louis Stevenson. It is an outlook of a man who has read and thought and felt and smiled and quivered with sympathy; who sees life's rawness and cruelties and brutalities, but sees them as mainly the result of ignorance; who opens a door to romance in the drabness of everyday existence; and who leaves one with the unshakable conviction that this bittersweet fruit of life would be well worth crunching between one's teeth, even if one had the choice "to be or not to be."

Mr. Locke was born in the island of Barbados, at the time when General Grant was striving to thrust his forces back of Vicksburg and cut off that Confederate stronghold. Sir Frederick Treves has noted that in this British island more than anywhere else one can still detect traces of the old-time planter-prince life of the West Indies. It is also celebrated as the healthiest spot of the whole group; and as the scene of the only "foreign" visit made by George Washington (with his invalid brother Lawrence, in 1751). But so far as I know, its place in literary history depends entirely on the youngster who saw the light there March 20, 1863. After an education at Queen's College in Trinidad, and then at Cambridge, he became an architect, and during the following twenty years won distinction in his profession. (He was secretary of the R. I. B. A. for ten years and is still an honorary member of the greatest architectural societies.)

He learnt French as a child, used to spend his youthful holidays in the Latin Quarter of Paris, and for a long period has lived at Cannes, where his villa and himself are institutions; so his natural understanding of Gallic character and the artist bohemian life have been supplemented by much keen observation. In fact, as Dawson says, "the south of France is almost as exclusively his literary territory as India is Kipling's, or Wessex Thomas Hardy's."

When "The Morals of Marcus Ordeyne" in 1905, and "The Beloved Vagabond" a year later, brought him an immediate and enthusiastic public, he gave up his architectural work; since then he has devoted himself single-mindedly to literature, dispensing unlimited hospitality at his Cannes home, and indulging to the full his delight in the companionship of children and dogs.

Mr. Locke is not only an exceedingly pleasant person to listen to, but he is an admirable story-teller. He declares he has never forgotten a pronouncement to him by Thomas Hardy:

> "He was being lionized in London and I, a young apprentice, was seated next him. He turned to me: 'You young men puzzle me. You're clever, cynical, often brilliant; but your books miss the bull's-eye—they tell everything except a story. I have never allowed myself to write Chapter the First till I have felt sure that I had a story and doubly sure that it was a story worth the telling.'"

In these days of omniscient youth, superior to and scornful of a "mere" story; accepting as axiomatic that happiness is cheap unreality; and that strong smells only are strength—one may be grateful enough for the man of sentiment and whimsy and cultivation, who considers it a high enough achievement to recount interesting tales of people who derive much satisfaction out of the world as it is.

* * *

At first reading, probably only a Dickens enthusiast would detect the hand of the creator of Pickwick in "The Perils of Certain English Prisoners, and their Treasure in Women, Children, Silver and Jewels"—under which comprehensive title ***Household Words*** published the tale starting in this issue as a three-part serial.

But this moving story of adventure has touches quite Dickens's own—such as the whole character of half-breed Christian George King (how Charles Dickens did love to flay a hypocrite alive!), and Commissioner Pordage with his "official coat;" and it is such an admirable yarn that its comparative obscurity is quite surprising.

The story was apparently written under an impulse springing from the universal absorption in the Lucknow and Cawnpore tragedies of the Indian Mutiny. Wilkie Collins sketched the plot, Dickens collaborating with many suggestions all through. Of the actual

(*Continued on page 8*)

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(*Continued from page 6*)

writing, Chapters I and III are by Dickens, Chapter II by Wilkie Collins; and the whole thing was issued in the extra Christmas Number ("containing the amount of one number and a half") of *Household Words* for 1857.

The original mss., 51 leaves in Dickens's autograph, 39 in Wilkie Collins's, crowded with notes and corrections by both, was bound up by the former and sent to his collaborator with the following letter:

Tavistock House
Saturday, Sixth February, 1858.

My dear Wilkie,

Thinking it may one day be interesting to you—say, when you are weak in both feet, and when I and Doncaster are quiet and the great race is over—to possess this little Memorial of our joint Christmas work, I have had it put together for you, and now send it on its coming home from the Binder.

Faithfully yours
Charles Dickens.

The above ms. was sold for £200 at the auction of Wilkie Collins's papers in 1890; it passed to the library of M. C. D. Borden, and was part of the Dickens collection of 92 volumes sold *en bloc* to George D. Smith for $8,400 in 1913.

❧

Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, 18th Lord of the Dunsany barony (which originated in 1439) is standing evidence—some inches over six feet of it—that the wind of imagination bloweth whither it listeth. Many admirable qualities went originally into the making of aristocracy, Norman, Saxon, Celtic, Gallic or what not; but fantasy and poetic feeling and delicate expressiveness are hardly among the most noticeable.

So when one reads "A Night at An Inn," or "The Tents of the Arabs" or many [illegible] another of Lord Dunsany's unusual plays and tales, it is with a fresh realization that [illegible] or barber are one so far as the appearance of the literary gift is concerned.

The first Dunsany volume, "The Gods of Pegana," appeared in 1905. At least [illegible] dozen, besides several volumes of plays, have followed since then—all quite clearly [illegible] from an inner necessity of expression, all quite regardless of other people's [illegible] conventions of popularity, or any external considerations whatever. And the work [illegible] such definite quality, such personal feeling, at times such poetic and dramatic [illegible] that it has steadily made a place for itself in the face of these "commercial handicaps." [illegible]

With thousands of men and women all over the world devoting themselves to [illegible] is really something to say of an author that he adds a distinct and sharply [illegible] colored thread to this vast weaving. And that Lord Dunsany has undoubtedly [illegible]

❧

Dr. Johnson contributed his "Idler" essays to a weekly newspaper called *The* [illegible] *Chronicle*, or *Weekly Gazette* which ran from April 15, 1758 to April 5, 1760.

The present chronicler must confess to being hugely bored by some of the [illegible] "bow-wow" pronouncements of the tea-guzzling lexicographer—and few writers [illegible] The very title of a great University's main literary course, "The Age of Johnson," [illegible] him turn to Peter Pindar:

"I own I like not Johnson's turgid style!
That gives an inch th' importance of a mile:

. . . .

Bids oceans labour with tremendous roar,
To heave a cockle-shell upon the shore.
Alike in every theme his pompous art,
Heaven's awful thunder or a rumbling cart."

But in many of these lighter essays, just because the subject was not of importance demanding a pontifical pronouncement, the touch is light and sure, and the man's real knowledge gives a perspective.

The deft essay herewith celebrates an event that had just stirred the easily inflamed [illegible]

(*Continued on page 10*)

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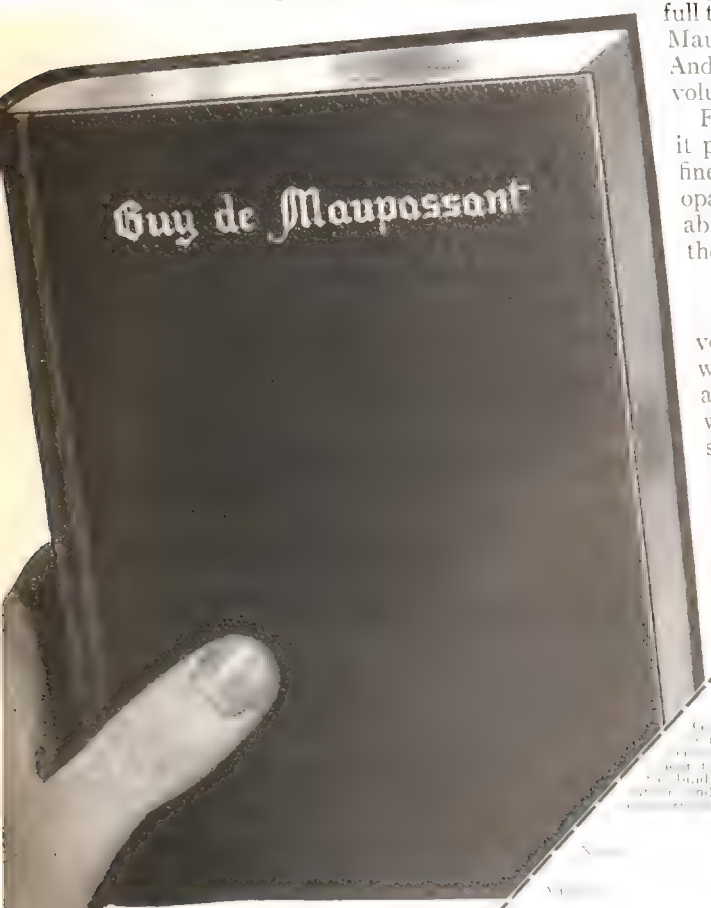

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(*Continued from page 8*)

English sporting blood. A young lady, having wagered that she would ride a thousand miles in a thousand hours, completed her feat within a month, "lying by" only two days at Newmarket; and "at her coming in, the country people strewed flowers in her way, and made great rejoicings on the occasion."

◆

Many cultivated Russians consider Alexander Pushkin the greatest figure that has yet appeared in Russian literature.

Born in the closing year of the 18th century and dying (from a wound received in a duel) before he was forty, Pushkin exercised an influence on both the poetry and fiction of his native land entirely out of proportion to the amount of his work. He studied the history and the ancient poetry of his own country; he came under the influence of Byron's poems and of Shakespeare; and he did much to free the language and the literary method from uncouthness on one side and an artificial copying of French writers on the other.

His most famous poems are "Eugeni Onyegin" and "Boris Gudunov"—from which the libretto of the popular Moussorgski opera is derived. Beyond these a single volume of poems and one of prose tales represent his work to English readers. His tales are astonishingly alive, and "modern" in dramatic construction, considering their date.

It is interesting that, like Dumas, Pushkin had a strain of African blood; his great-grandfather on his mother's side was a negro, who became a favorite of Peter the Great and was raised to the nobility. H. W. L.

◆

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The Open Road!

THE DAUNTLESS HORSEMAN calls to his mare, she clears the
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eping in the moonlight, through silent hamlets, through hollows shrouded
silvery mist, and over lonely moorland. Startled villagers peer out, and
tlers run out from inns, as the regular clot-a-clap of hoofs rings on through
the long night. We feel the very rush of the wind in our ears as
read the story of Dick Turpin's famous ride, so full of verve and
that it is one of the marvels of literature which will live forever.

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The Sun, New York.

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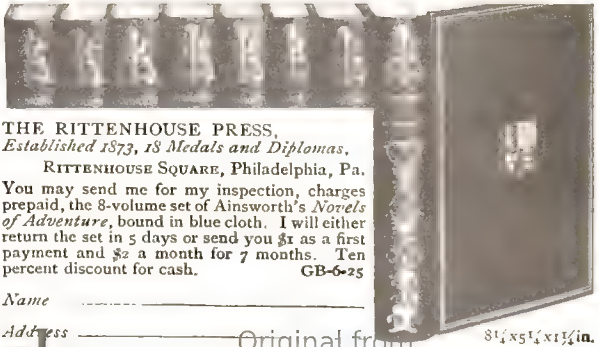

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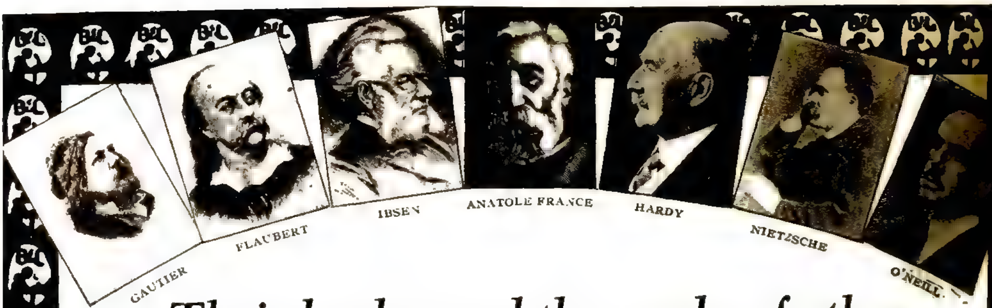

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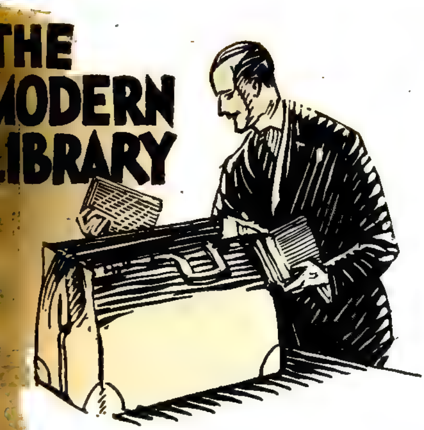

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A department offering its services without charge to readers of THE GOLDEN BOOK. All letters to the Bureau are treated as personal and confidential and are answered in full by mail. Below appear a few extracts from recent correspondence relating to subjects of general interest. Address Investment Bureau, THE GOLDEN BOOK, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

THE FINANCIAL DIRECTORY

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A Steadily Growing Industry

By the Investment Editor

The railroads of this country, since the first train was run about ninety years ago, have grown into a twenty billion dollar industry. The electric power and light business, born in the early eighties, in about half that time, has had six billion dollars invested in it and today is growing faster than the railroads. There are few people still living who might, as children, have seen the first train; a great many living can remember the first electric lights.

It is estimated that there are nearly nine million homes in this country so located that they might have electricity from central power stations but are without it. And, of course, home lighting is but one use of electricity. The industry is steadily finding new fields of usefulness for its product and has become almost as indispensable to the public welfare as the railroads. Not only has it permanently displaced the oil lamp in the home, but it already has many other uses there, and its utilization in other industries for the operation of machinery is in its infancy. Ultimately a good part of our railroads will probably be operated by electricity.

A leading investment banking house has gathered some interesting and instructive data regarding this industry which it is presenting to the public in advertisements. Among other things it shows that in 1920 there were nearly 50 billion kilowatt-hours of electric energy consumed in this country as compared with less than nine billion for the next largest national consumer of electricity—Germany. We consume more than five times as much electricity as Germany, seven times as much as Japan, more than seven times what Great Britain consumes, nine times as much as France, nearly ten times as much as Canada, more than fourteen times as much as Italy and eighteen times as much as Switzerland. In other words, we consume as much if not more electricity than all other countries of the world combined.

Since 1902, with the exception of two years, the production of electrical energy in this country has grown rapidly and steadily. Those two were the after-war depression years of 1920 and 1921, when there was a slight drop. In 1923 the amount produced was twenty-three and a half times as much as it was in 1902, twenty-one years previous. In 1922 and 1923 the growth was greater than in any previous years.

One explanation of this rapid growth is found in the decreasing cost of electricity. A dollar would buy little more than two thousand candle power of electricity in 1902; in 1922 it would buy more than sixteen thousand. Growing electric light bills, therefore, should not be laid to the higher cost of living but to the cost of higher and better living. Inventive genius in the persons of such men as Thomas A. Edison has played a great part in this reduction of costs that makes possible better living. The steadily mounting growth in demand for the product has been a factor in reducing costs, as it has in the automobile industry, which has grown to enormous proportions during the same past two decades.

Earnings of electric power and light companies have been more stable and have shown steadier growth than those in any other field. The investment house referred to above says, "Authoritative compilations show that not only the aggregate annual gross receipts of the power and light companies derived from the sale of energy have never shown a decrease, but no single important section of the country has ever reported a decrease in gross revenues." Of course, not always has the better gross produced a better net. There the matter of management and efficiency of operation enters. But an excellent authority on the subject has stated that an exhaustive research shows no instance of failure to meet its interest obligations on the part of any company doing an exclusively electric light and power bus-

(Continued on page 16)

To The Man Whose Income is $50,000

LOOK back to the days when you were earning $200 a month; or when you first reached $5,000 a year. At that time you were paving the way for future opportunity by carefully setting aside a definite part of your income every month for safe investment.

The opportunity came. Your accumulated capital made it possible to take full advantage of it. Do you still follow the well-proved course that brought the rewards you enjoy today, so that tomorrow will yield even larger ones?

A Safe Reserve

And as incomes grow, so do they also shrink sometimes—without warning. How well do you guard against having to live upon a much smaller one than you have now?

Now is the time to ask yourself, "What part of my present earnings *should* I reserve for future spending and enjoyment? What part of that reserve should I use for investment; what part for insurance; how much can I afford for speculative possibilities?" Those questions need a correct answer.

A Profitable Plan

As an important part of its service to investors, the William R. Compton Company has developed a new plan, which will help you settle these problems. Among the thousands of business and professional men who are making profitable use of this plan is a St. Louis manufacturer whose salary is $60,000. Recently he asked us to send a copy to each of his executives and department heads, adding, "I only wish I had had this valuable little book many years sooner."

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BONDS SHOULD BE KNOWN BY THE COMPANY THEY KEEP

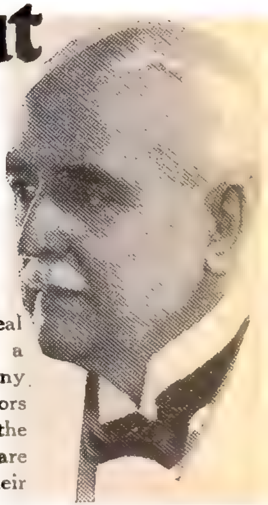
(*Continued from page 14*)

ness during the trying conditions of the post-war years, and that a very small number failed to pay their established dividends regularly.

A comparative study between investment in railroad bonds and public utility bonds in the light and power field, including some gas company issues, starting far back before the war, shows that the light and power bonds have consistently proven better investments than railroad bonds. Between 1906 and 1908 a person with $700,000 to invest might have bought a well diversified list of the best railroad bonds bearing an average interest rate of a little less than 4 per cent., or the same amount of high grade light and power company bonds bearing an average interest rate of 5 per cent. By the Spring of 1914, or just before the war, the railroad bonds would have shown a $19,000 drop in market value while the public utility bonds would have shown a $32,000 gain. In December, 1918, just after the war, the railroad list was $60,000 below its cost and the public utility list $19,000 below. Again in April, 1921, near the low point of the bond market for this generation, the railroad list was off $102,000 and the public utility list $92,000. Since then the railroad bonds, several of which are of early maturity and will soon be paid off at par, have advanced until they are now selling for almost exactly what they would have cost years ago, but the public utility bonds have advanced still farther and are selling for $30,000 more than they would have cost.

I Discovered This About Making Money

It Takes Only a Few Years to Acquire Wealth If You Go About It the Right Way



"I threw away $4,700 trying to attain wealth by taking long chances," one of the most successful investors we have known states. "Twice I lost brilliant opportunities to step into profitable partnerships; once I could have started in business for myself to wonderful advantage if I only had the money. And I had been married ten years and had a good-sized family before I discovered the secret of safe investing. Then by a plan given me by financial experts, I accumulated $30,000 in Forman First Mortgage Real Estate Bonds. And I laid the foundation of that $30,000—and the wealth I now have—on a small salary. I only wish I had known sooner!"

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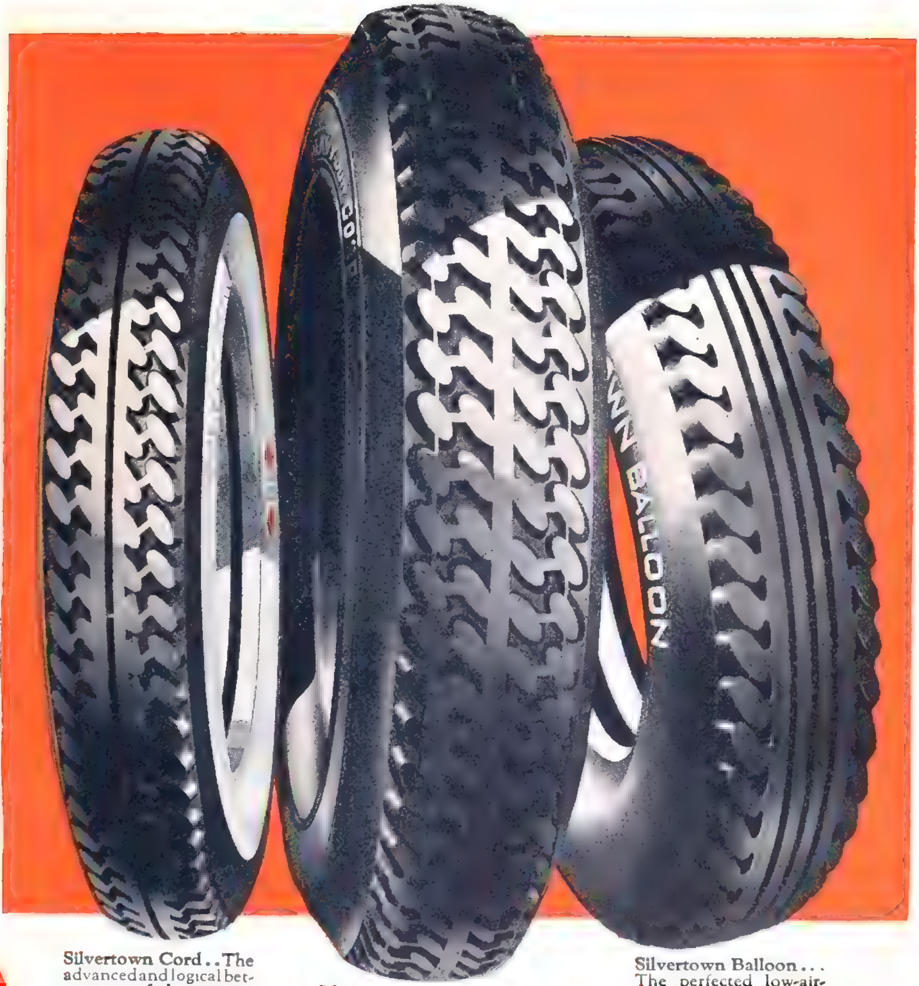

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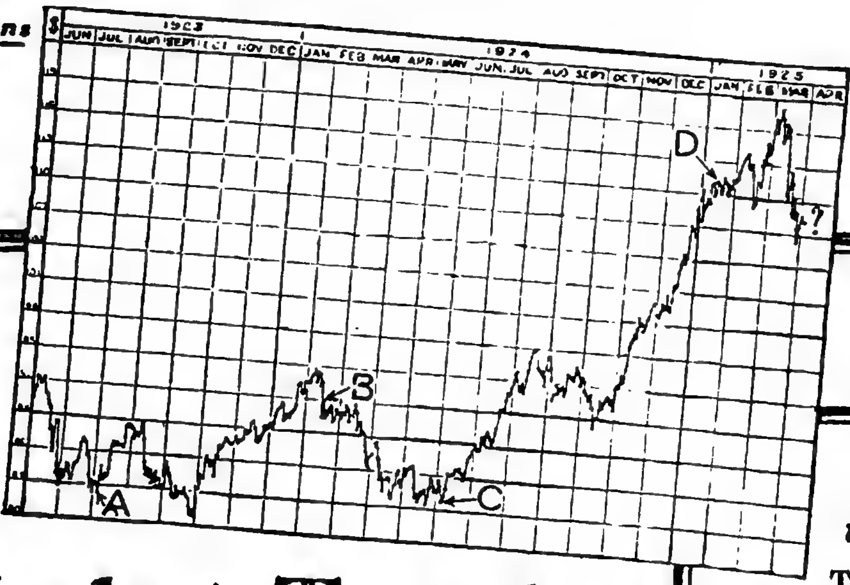

No method of forecasting has ever proved 100% accurate. The Brookmire Service does not pretend to absolute mechanical perfection. It does, however, claim consistent, profitable accuracy, based on a 21-year record. The chart at the left explains the reason for the steady growth of the Brookmire clientele.

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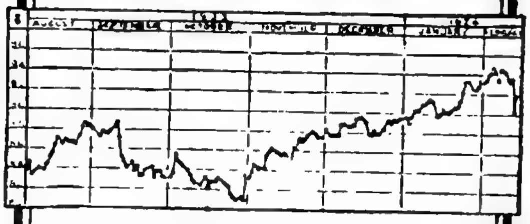
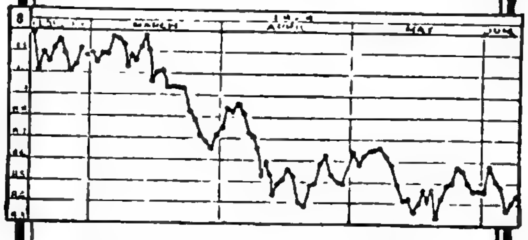
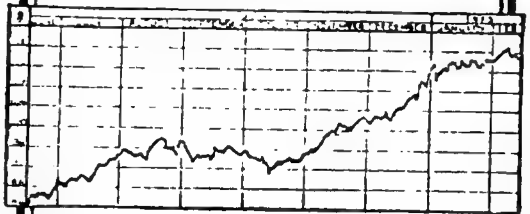


In the Fall of 1923 Brookmire's recommended a list of 30 stocks. In a period of six months this list showed an average net gain of nearly 14%



In February, 1924, Brookmire's recommended selling and two months later the industrial averages had declined nearly 10%



In June, 1924, purchases were again recommended and industrial averages advanced 35%

Thus, in less than a year and a half speculation on a 50% margin would show a profit of over 150%; $25,000 in the fall of 1923 increased to $62,500 at the end of 1924. These are not unusual cases.

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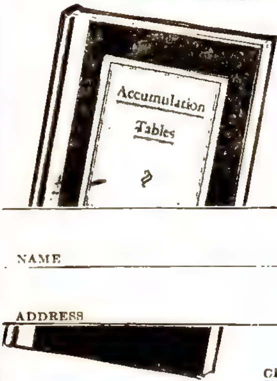

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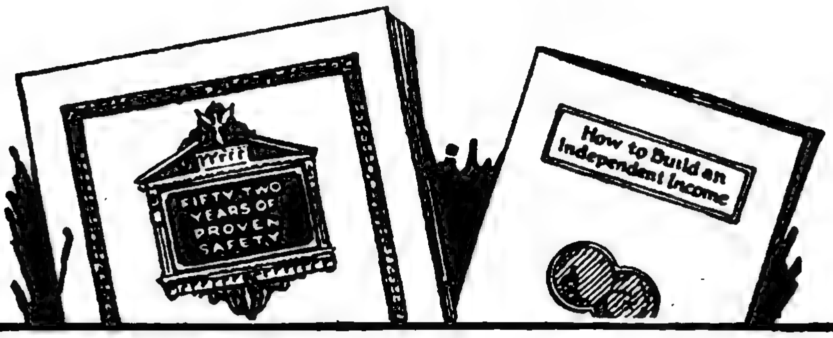
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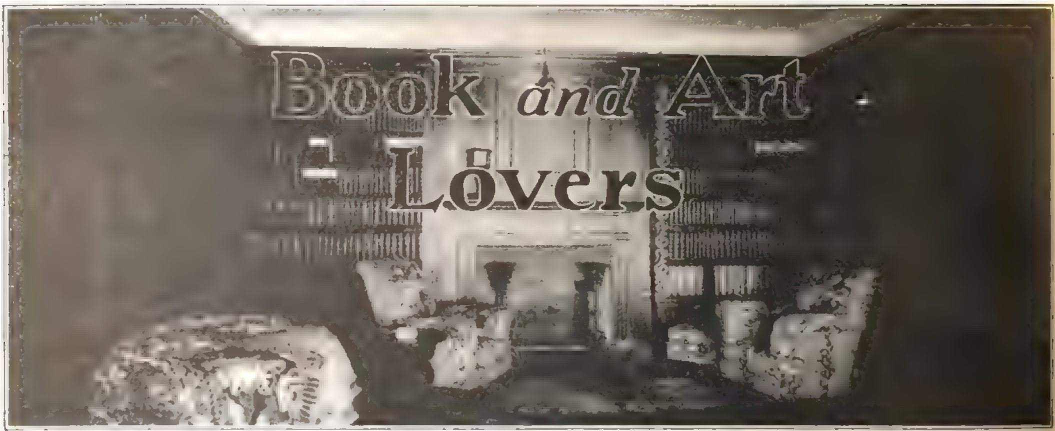

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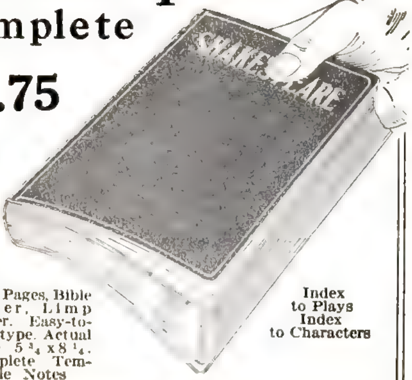

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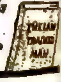

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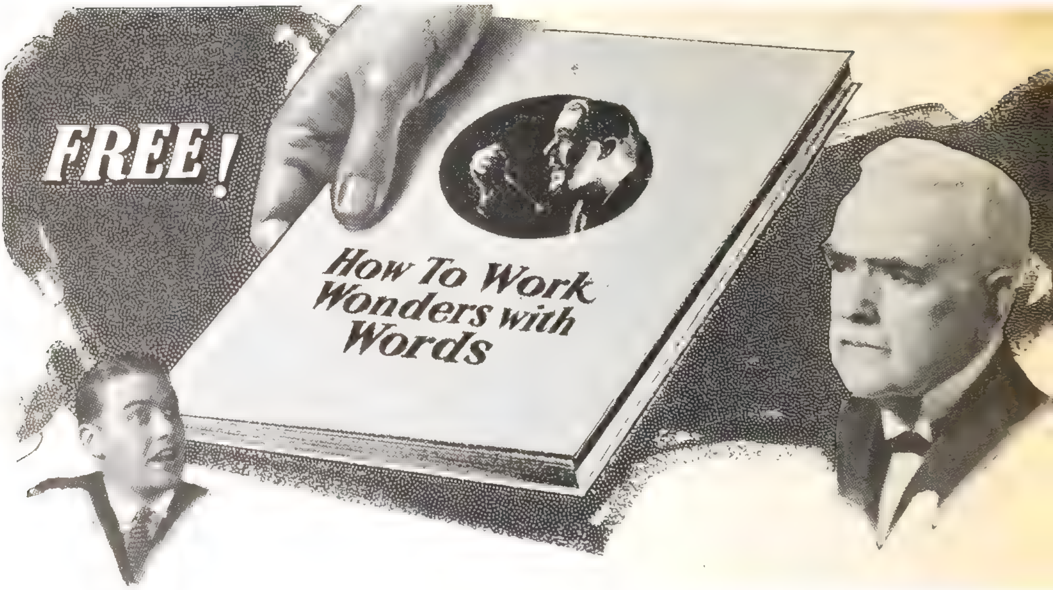
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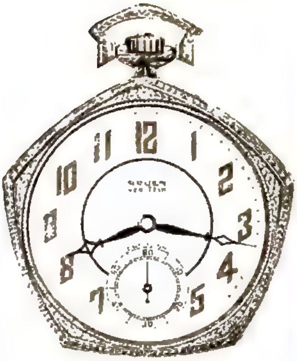
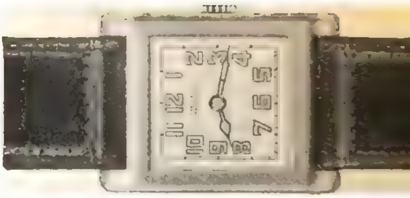


Pentagon 124



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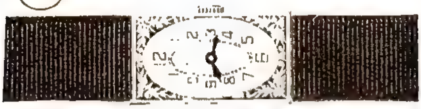
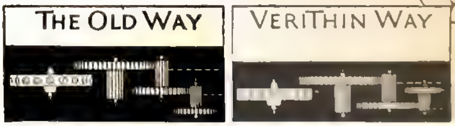
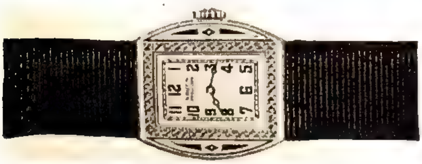


Cartouche 96



The Gruen VeriThin wheel train, one of the technical improvements by which an accurate watch is made THIN *without loss in strength of parts*



Cartouche 32

Five Supreme Minds

Zarathustra, the Persian (About 1000 B.C.)

Zarathustra asked Ahura-Mazda: "Ahura-Mazda, Heavenly, Holiest, Creator of the corporeal world, Pure! When a right-living man dies, where does his spirit stay . . . throughout the third night?"

Then answered Ahura-Mazda: "Near his head it sits itself down praying happiness for itself: 'Happiness be to the man who conduces to the happiness of each. May Ahura-Mazda create, ruling after His wish. . . .'

"When the lapse of the third night turns itself to light, then the spirit of the man goes forward, recollecting itself at the perfume of plants. A wind blows to meet it from the mid-day region, a sweet-scented one, more sweet-scented than the other winds. . . .

"In that wind there comes to meet him his own self in the figure of a maiden, one beautiful, shining, with shining arms. . . .

"Then to her speaks the spirit of the man, asking: 'What maiden art thou whom I see here as the fairest of all?'

"Then she replies to him: 'I am, O youth, thy good thoughts, words, and works, thy good self, thine own law of thine own body.'" The Khordah-Avesta.

* * *

Lao-Tze, of China (About 600 B.C.)

All things in Nature work silently. They come into being and possess nothing. They fulfil their functions and make no claims. . . .

The reason why rivers and seas are able to be lords over a hundred mountain streams, is that they know how to keep below them. That is why they are able to reign over all the mountain streams. The Tao Tê Ching.

* * *

Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, of India (About 500 B.C.)

The life of one is at times sustained by the life of another. When such is the case the other one becomes one's self. For this reason some give their lives that others may live, and live more vigorously, and so the myself and the other become one and the same person.

* * *

Jesus, of Nazareth

Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

* * *

Muhammad, of Arabia (569–632 A.D.)

Whoso pursueth the road of knowledge, God will direct him to the road of Paradise; and verily the angels spread their arms to receive him who seeketh after knowledge; and everything in heaven and earth will ask grace for him; and verily the superiority of a learned man over a mere worshipper is like that of the full moon over all the stars.

The Booklover's Calendar.

> *There's such a light and such a heat*
> *And such a joy in June.*
> George Macdonald.

Roman: Ovid makes Juno claim the naming; but elsewhere derives it from the Juniores.

Persian: The month Tir.

Chinese and Zodiacal: The Sun enters Cancer, which is the sheep station—the Dragon Boat Festival coming on the summer solstice.

Hebrew: Sivan, until the 23d, when Tammuz begins.

Mohammedan: Zu'l-Qa'dah; Zu'l-Hijjah, another sacred month, begins on the 23d.

American Indian: Rose Moon.

Japanese: Satsuki, the Early Moon. Festival of Tenno-Sama, or Heavenly King, when ornamented flower-carts are drawn through the streets. Festival of Inari, 19th and 20th.

Hindu: Months of Jeshtha and Ashadh. Fast of Savitri-vrata by women, to avoid widowhood.

Finnish: Midsummer festival, when Sunset and Sunrise clasp each other in betrothal.

Moon, full on 6th; new, 21st.

June

1 *Whit Monday. Marlowe died, 1593.* The annual pilgrimage to the cave of St. Patrick's Purgatory, in Lough Derg, Donegal, was from this day to mid-August.

2 *Mme. de Scudery died, 1701. Salem Witchcraft Trials began, 1692.*

Now I see gentlemen and ladies sitting in boats at anchor on the lakes, in the calm afternoons, under parasols, making use of Nature.
THOREAU.

3 *Almanack for 1655, By Andrew Waterman, Mariner:*

Good to marry, or contract a wife, (for then women will be fond and loving) . . . June 1, 3, 11, 19, 21.

4 June's very breast was bare this night of nights. MASEFIELD.

5 *Socrates born, 468 B. C. Weber died, 1826.*

Sweet then was the singing of the grasshoppers, sweet was the odour of the fruits. LONGUS.

6 *Velasquez born, 1599; Corneille, 1606. Ariosto died, 1533.*

Here come two young gentlewomen to see Mr. Holland, and one of them could play pretty well upon the viallin, but good God! how these ignorant people did cry her up for it. PEPYS.

7 *Trinity Sunday. Blackmore born, 1825.*

AN ENGLISH JOKE THAT LASTED FOUR CENTURIES:

This day, 1701, William Parsley, butcher of Much Easton, and Jane his wife, by means of their quiet, peaceable, tender and loving cohabitation for three years previous, claimed and received the Dunmow Flitch of bacon.
DUNMOW PRIORY COURT ROLL.

8 *Cagliostro born, 1743. Died: Mohammed, 632; Winckelmann, 1768; Thomas Paine, 1809; Jerrold, 1857.*

A most portentous face of scoundrelism (Cagliostro): a fat, snub, abominable face; dew-lapped, flat-nosed, greasy, full of greediness, sensuality, oxlike obstinacy . . . the most perfect quack-face produced by the 18th century. CARLYLE.

9 *Schamyl of Circassia born, 1797. St. Columba died, 597.*

He who thinks of consequences is wanting in bravery. SCHAMYL.

10 *Frisk.* O me, madam! Why does not your ladyship frequent the Mulberry Garden oftener?

Strick. Ay, I was there, Madam Frisk, and the garden was very full, madam, of gentlemen and ladies that made love together till twelve o'clock at night, the prettyly'st. I vow 'twould do one's heart good to see them.

Theo. Why that's a time for cats to make love in. SHADWELL.

11 *St. Barnabas (Corpus Christi). Bacon died, 1292; Sir Kenelm Digby, 1665.*

To confer, at the distance of the Indies, by sympathetic conveyances may be as usual to future times as to us in literary correspondence.
DIGBY.

12 *Kingsley born, 1819; Martineau, 1802. Dr. Arnold died, 1842.*

A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June.
COLERIDGE.

13 It is natural that wild strawberries, the first fruit which the earth bears, should emit, and be as it were, an embodiment of that vernal fragrance with which the air has teemed. THOREAU.

14 O my love's like a red, red rose.
That's newly sprung in June.
Burns.

15 *"Phiz" born, 1815. Campbell died, 1844.*

God was palpably present in the country, and the devil had gone with the world to town. **Hardy.**

16 The pedigree of honey
Does not concern the bee;
A clover, any time, to him
Is aristocracy. **Emily Dickinson.**

17 *Wesley born, 1703. Addison died, 1719; Crebillon, 1762. Battle of Bunker Hill, 1775; Roxburghe Club founded, 1812.*

By her outrageous jealousy and abominable temper, Mrs. Wesley deserves to be classed in a triad with Xantippe and the wife of Job, as one of the three bad wives. **Southey.**

18 *Waterloo, 1815.*

There is green in the branches; and I'm moved by an impulse—the impulse of Spring is in my feet; India-rubber seems to have come into the soles of my feet. **George Moore.**

19 *The Fête Dieu. Magna Charta signed, 1215. James I born, 1566; Pascal, 1623.*

The morning star, the light-bringer—a white-gold ball in the violet-purple sky. **Jefferies.**

20 No price is set on the lavish summer;
June may be had by the poorest comer. **Lowell.**

21 *Died, Skelton 1529; Capt. John Smith, 1631.*

Why are there trees I never walk under but large and melodious thoughts descend upon me? **Walt Whitman.**

22 *Machiavelli died, 1527.*

The tempered light of the woods is like a perpetual morning, and is stimulating and heroic.
Emerson.

23 The fishermen . . . were indifferent like pieces of dead nature. You might have trepanned every one of their innocent heads and found no more than so much coiled fishing line below their skull. **Stevenson.**

24 *Midsummer Day. St. John Baptist. Empress Josephine born, 1763; Dumas, 1803.*

"Thou silver glow-worm, oh, lend
me thy light,
I must gather the mystic St. John's
wort tonight—
The wonderful herb, whose leaf will
decide
If the coming year shall make me a
bride." (*German*).

25 Everything looked and smiled of the morning, like the rosy freshly-washed face of a baby who had just waked up. **Turgeniev.**

26 *Gilbert White died, 1793.*

Budded now was the leafy house of June. Each tree was dressed like a young girl for a dance.
Donn Byrne.

27 Where the pools are bright and deep,
Where the grey trout lies asleep,
Up the river and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.
James Hogg.

28 *St. Peter's Eve. Rubens born, 1577; Rousseau, 1712.*

Peter di Porca, when made Pope in 884, changed his name to Sergius, "deeming that it would be presumptuous to have himself styled Peter the Second."

29 *ASTROLOGICAL ALMANAC:* "Public utilities, dry goods and sugar high at 4.24. Not favorable to deal with lawyers at 5.00 as results are separative."

30 Hey, now the day dauis;
The jolie Cok crauis.
Alex. Montgomerie.

The Golden Book Magazine

Volume I JUNE, 1925 Number 6

The Princess's Kingdom

By WILLIAM J. LOCKE

W J Locke

THAT there was once a real Prince Rabomirski is beyond question. That he was Ottilie's father may be taken for granted. But that the Princess Rabomirski had a right to bear the title many folks were scandalously prepared to deny. It is true that when the news of the Prince's death reached Monte Carlo, the Princess, who was there at the time, showed various persons on whose indiscretion she could rely a holograph letter of condolence from the Tsar, and later unfolded to the amiable muddle-headed the intricacies of a lawsuit which she was instituting for the recovery of the estates in Poland; but her detractors roundly declared the holograph letter to be a forgery and the lawsuit a fiction of her crafty brain. Princess however she continued to style herself in Cosmopolis, and Princess she was styled by all and sundry. And little Ottilie Rabomirski was called the Princess Ottilie.

Among the people who joined heart and soul with the detractors was young Vince Somerset. If there was one person whom he despised and hated more than Count Bernheim (of the Holy Roman Empire) it was the Princess Rabomirski. In his eyes she was everything that a princess, a lady, a woman, and a mother should not be. She dressed ten years younger than was seemly, she spoke English like a barmaid and French like a cocotte, she gambled her way through Europe from year's end to year's end, and after neglecting Ottilie for twenty years, she was about to marry her to Bernheim. The last was the unforgivable offence.

The young man walked up and down the Casino Terrace of Illerville-sur-Mer, and poured into a friend's ear his flaming indignation. He was nine and twenty, and though he pursued the unpoetical avocation of sub-editing the foreign telegrams on a London daily newspaper, retained some of the vehemence of undergraduate days when he had chosen the career (now abandoned) of poet, artist, dramatist, and irreconcilable politician.

"Look at them!" he cried, indicating a couple seated at a distant table beneath the awning of the café. "Did you ever see anything so horrible in your life? The maiden and the Minotaur. When I heard of the

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engagement to-day I wouldn't believe it until she herself told me. She doesn't know the man's abomination. He's a by-word of reproach through Europe. His name stinks like his infernal body. The live air reeks with the scent he pours upon himself. There can be no turpitude under the sun in which the wretch doesn't wallow. Do you know that he killed his first wife? Oh, I don't mean that he cut her throat. That's far too primitive for such a complex hound. There are other ways of murdering a woman, my dear Ross. You kick her body and break her heart and defile her soul. That's what he did. And he has done it to other women."

"But, my dear man," remarked Ross, elderly and cynical, "he is colossally rich."

"Rich! Do you know where he made his money? In the cesspool of European finance. He's a Jew by race, a German by parentage, an Italian by upbringing and a Greek by profession. He has bucket-shops and low-down money-lenders' cribs and rotten companies all over the Continent. Do you remember Sequasto and Co.? That was Bernheim. England's too hot to hold him. Look at him now he has taken off his hat. Do you know why he wears his greasy hair plastered over half his damned forehead? It's to hide the mark of the Beast. He's Antichrist! And when I think of that Jezebel from the Mile End Road putting Ottilie into his arms, it makes me see red. By heavens, it's touch and go that I don't slay the pair of them."

"Very likely they're not as bad as they're painted," said his friend.

"She couldn't be," Somerset retorted grimly.

Ross laughed, looked at his watch, and announced that it was time for *apéritifs*. The young man assented moodily, and they crossed the Terrace to the café tables beneath the awning. It was the dying afternoon of a sultry August day, and most of Illerville had deserted tennis courts, *tir aux pigeons* and other distractions to listen lazily to the band in the Casino shade. The place was crowded; not a table vacant. When the waiter at last brought one from the interior of the café, he dumped it down beside the table occupied by the unspeakable Bernheim and the little Princess Ottilie. Somerset raised his hat as he took his seat. Bernheim responded with elaborate politeness, and Princess Ottilie greeted him with a faint smile. The engaged pair spoke very little to each other. Bernheim lounged back in his chair smoking a cigar and looked out to sea with a bored expression. When the girl made a casual remark he nodded rudely without turning his head. Somerset felt an irresistible desire to kick him. His external appearance was of the type that irritated the young Englishman. He was too handsome in a hard, swaggering black-mustachioed way; he exaggerated to offence the English style of easy dress; he wore a too devil-may-care Panama, a too obtrusive coloured shirt and club tie; he wore no waistcoat, and the hem of his new flannel trousers, turned up six inches, disclosed a stretch of tan-coloured silk socks clocked with gold matching elegant tan shoes. He went about with a broken-spirited poodle. He was inordinately scented. Somerset glowered at him, and let his drink remain untasted.

Presently Bernheim summoned the waiter, paid him for the tea the girl had been drinking and pushed back his chair.

"This hole is getting on my nerves," he said in French to his companion. "I am going into the *cercle* to play écarté. Will you go to your mother whom I see over there, or will you stay here?"

"I'll stay here," said the little Princess Ottilie.

Bernheim nodded and swaggered off. Somerset bent forward.

"I must see you alone to-night—quite alone. I must have you all to myself. How can you manage it?"

Ottilie looked at him anxiously. She was fair and innocent, of a prettiness more English than foreign, and the scare in her blue eyes made them all the more appealing to the young man.

"What is the good? You can't help me. Don't you see that it is all arranged?"

"I'll undertake to disarrange it at a moment's notice," said Somerset.

"Hush!" she whispered, glancing round; "somebody will hear. Everything is gossiped about in this place."

"Well, will you meet me?" the young man persisted.

"If I can," she sighed. "If they are both playing baccarat I may slip out for a little."

"As at Spa."

She smiled and a slight flush came into her cheek.

"Yes, as at Spa. Wait for me on the *plage* at the bottom of the Casino steps. Now I must go to my mother. She would not like to see me talking to you."

"The Princess hates me like poison. Do you know why?"

"No, and you are not going to tell me," she said demurely. "*Au revoir.*"

When she had passed out of earshot, Ross touched the young man's arm.

"I'm afraid, my dear Somerset, you are playing a particularly silly fool's game."

"Have you never played it?"

"Heaven forbid!"

"It would be a precious sight better for you if you had," growled Somerset.

"I'll take another quinquina," said Ross.

"Did you see the way in which the brute treated her?" Somerset exclaimed angrily. "If it's like that before marriage, what will it be after?"

"Plenty of money, separate establishments, perfect independence and happiness for each."

Somerset rose from the table.

"There are times, my good Ross," said he, "when I absolutely hate you."

Somerset had first met the Princess Rabomirski and her daughter three years before, at Spa. They were staying at the same hotel, a very modest one which, to Somerset's mind, ill-accorded with the Princess's pretensions. Bernheim was also in attendance, but he disposed his valet, his motor-car, and himself in the luxurious Hôtel d'Orange, as befitted a man of his quality; also he was in attendance not on Ottilie, but on the Princess, who at that time was three years younger and a trifle less painted. Now, at Illerville-sur-Mer the trio were stopping at the Hotel Splendide, a sumptuous hostelry where season prices were far above Somerset's moderate means. He contented himself with the little hotel next door, and hated the Hotel Splendide and all that it contained, save Ottilie, with all his heart. But at Spa, the Princess was evidently in low water from which she did not seem to be rescued by her varying luck at the tables. Ottilie was then a child of seventeen, and Somerset was less attracted by her delicate beauty than by her extraordinary loneliness. Day after day, night after night he would come upon her sitting solitary on one of the settees in the gaming-rooms, like a forgotten fan or flower, or wandering wistfully from table to table, idly watching the revolving wheels. Sometimes she would pause behind her mother's or Bernheim's chair to watch their game; but the Princess called her a little *porte-malheur* and would drive her away. In the mornings, or on other rare occasions, when the elder inseparables were not playing roulette, Ottilie hovered round them at a distance, as disregarded as a shadow that followed them in space of less dimensions, as it were, wherever they went. In the Casino rooms, if men spoke to her, she replied in shy monosyllables and shrank away. Somerset, who had made regular acquaintance with the Princess at the hotel and taken a chivalrous pity on the girl's loneliness, she admitted first to a timid friendship, and then to a childlike intimacy. Her face would brighten and her heart beat a little faster when she saw his young, well-knit figure appear in the distance; for she knew he would come straight to her and take her from the hot room, heavy with perfumes and tobacco, on to the cool balcony, and talk of all manner of pleasant things. And Somerset found in this neglected, little sham Princess what his youth was pleased to designate a flower-like soul. Those were idyllic hours. The Princess, glad to get the embarrassing child out of the way, took no notice of the intimacy. Somerset fell in love.

It lasted out a three-years' separation, during which he did not hear from her. He had written to several addresses, but a cold Post Office returned his letters undelivered, and his only consolation was to piece together from various sources the unedifying histories of the Princess Rabomirski and the Count Bernheim of the Holy Roman Empire. He came to Illerville-sur-Mer for an August holiday. The first thing he did when shown into his hotel bedroom was to gaze out of window at the beach and the sea. The first person his eyes rested upon was the little Princess Ottilie issuing, alone as usual, from the doors of the next hotel.

He had been at Illerville a fortnight—a fortnight of painful joy. Things had changed. Their interviews had been mostly stolen, for the Princess Rabomirski had rudely declined to renew the acquaintance and had forbidden Ottilie to speak to him. The girl, though apparently as much neglected as ever, was guarded against him with peculiar ingenuity. Somerset, aware that Ottilie, now grown from a child into an exquisitely beautiful and marriageable young woman, was destined by a hardened sinner like the Princess for a wealthier husband than a poor newspaper man with no particular prospects, could not, however, quite understand the reasons for the virulent hatred of which he was the object. He overheard the Princess one day cursing her daughter in execrable German for having acknowledged his bow a short time before. Their only undisturbed time together was in the sea during the bathing hour. The Princess, hating the pebbly beach which cut to pieces her high-heeled shoes, never watched the bathers; and Bernheim did not bathe (Somerset, prejudiced, declared that he did not even wash) but remained in his bedroom till the hour of *déjeuner*. Ottilie, attended only by her maid, came down to the water's edge, threw off her *peignoir*, and, plunging into the water, found Somerset waiting.

Now Somerset was a strong swimmer. Moderately proficient at all games as a boy and an undergraduate, he had found that swimming was the only sport in which he excelled, and he had cultivated and maintained the art. Oddly enough, the little Princess Ottilie, in spite of her apparent fragility, was also an excellent and fearless swimmer. She had another queer delight for a creature so daintily feminine, the *salle d'armes*, so that the muscles of her young limbs were firm and well ordered. But the sea was her passion. If an additional bond between Somerset and herself were needed it would have been this. Yet, though it is a pleasant thing to swim far away into the loneliness of the sea with the object of one's affections, the conditions do not encourage sustained conversation on subjects of vital interest. On the day when Somerset learned that his little princess was engaged to Bernheim he burned to tell her more than could be spluttered out in ten fathoms of water. So he urged her to an assignation.

At half-past ten she joined him at the bottom of the Casino steps. The shingly beach was deserted, but on the terrace above the throng was great, owing to the breathless heat of the night.

"Thank Heaven you have come," said he. "Do you know how I have longed for you?"

She glanced up wistfully into his face. In her simple cream dress and burnt straw hat adorned with white roses around the brim, she looked very fair and childlike.

"You mustn't say such things," she whispered. "They are wrong now. I am engaged to be married."

"I won't hear of it," said Somerset. "It is a horrible nightmare—your engagement. Don't you know that I love you? I loved you the first minute I set my eyes on you at Spa."

Princess Ottilie sighed, and they walked along the boards behind the bathing-machines, and down the rattling beach to the shelter of a fishing boat, where they sat down, screened from the world with the murmuring sea in front of them. Somerset talked of his love and the hatefulness of Bernheim. The little Princess sighed again.

"I have worse news still," she said. "It will pain you. We are going to Paris to-morrow, and then on to Aix-les-Bains. They have just decided. They say the baccarat here is silly, and they might as well play for bon-bons. So we must say good-bye to-night—and it will be good-bye for always."

"I will come to Aix-les-Bains," said Somerset.

"No—no," she answered quickly. "It would only bring trouble on me and do no good. We must part to-night. Don't you think it hurts me?"

"But you must love me," said Somerset.

"I do," she said simply, "and that is why it hurts. Now I must be going back."

"Ottilie," said Somerset, grasping her hands. "Need you ever go back?"

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"Come away from this hateful place with me—now, this minute. You need never see Bernheim again as long as you live. Listen. My friend Ross has a motor-car. I can manage it—so there will be only us two. Run into your hotel for a thick cloak, and meet me as quickly as you can behind the tennis-courts. If we go full speed we'll catch the night-boat at Dieppe. It will be a wild race for our life happiness. Come."

In his excitement he rose and pulled her to her feet. They faced each other for a few glorious moments, panting for breath, and then Princess Ottilie broke down and cried bitterly.

"I can't, dear, I can't. I must marry Bernheim. It is to save my mother from something dreadful. I don't know what it is—but she went on her knees to me, and I promised."

"If there's a woman in Europe capable of getting out of her difficulties unaided it is the Princess Rabomirski," said Somerset. "I am not going to let you be sold. You are mine, Ottilie, and by Heaven, I'm going to have you. Come."

He urged, he pleaded, he put his strong arms around her as if he would carry her away bodily. He did everything that a frantic young man could do. But the more the little Princess wept, the more inflexible she became. Somerset had not realized before this steel in her nature. Raging and vehemently urging he accompanied her back to the Casino steps.

"Would you like to say good-bye to me to-morrow morning, instead of to-night?" she asked, holding out her hand.

"I am never going to say good-bye," cried Somerset.

"I shall slip out to-morrow morning for a last swim—at six o'clock," she said, unheeding his exclamation. "Our train goes at ten." Then she came very close to him.

"Vince, dear, if you love me, don't make me more unhappy than I am."

It was an appeal to his chivalry. He kissed her hand, and said:

"At six o'clock."

But Somerset had no intention of bidding her a final farewell in the morning. If he followed her the world over he would snatch her out of the arms of the accursed Bernheim and marry her by main force. As for the foreign telegrams of *The Daily Post*, he cared not how they would be sub-edited. He went to bed with lofty disregard of Fleet Street and bread and butter. As for the shame from which Ottilie's marriage would save her sainted mother, he did not believe a word of it. She was selling Ottilie to Bernheim for cash down. He stayed awake most of the night plotting schemes for the rescue of his Princess. It would be an excellent plan to insult Bernheim and slay him outright in a duel. Its disadvantages lay in his own imperfections as a duellist, and for the first time he cursed the benign laws of his country. At length he fell asleep; woke up to find it daylight, and leaped to his feet in a horrible scare. But a sight of his watch reassured him. It was only five o'clock. At half-past he put on a set of bathing things and sat down by the window to watch the hall door of the Hotel Splendide. At six, out came the familiar figure of the little Princess, draped in her white *peignoir*. She glanced up at Somerset's window. He waved his hand, and in a minute or two they were standing side by side at the water's edge. It was far away from the regular bathing-place marked by the bathing cabins, and further still from the fishing end of the beach where alone at that early hour were signs of life visible. The town behind them slept in warmth and light. The sea stretched out blue before them unrippled in the still air. A little bank of purple cloud on the horizon presaged a burning day.

The little Princess dropped her *peignoir* and kicked off her straw-soled shoes, and gave her hand to her companion. He glanced at the little white feet which he was tempted to fall down and kiss, and then at the wistful face below the blue-silk foulard knotted in front over the bathing-cap. His heart leaped at her bewildering sweetness. She was the morning incarnate.

She read his eyes and flushed pink.

"Let us go in," she said.

They waded in together, hand-in-hand, until they were waist deep. Then they struck out, making for the open sea. The sting of the night had already passed from the water. To their young blood it felt warm. They swam near together, Ottilie using a steady breast stroke and Somerset a side stroke, so that he could look at her flushed and glistening face. From the blue of the sea and the blue of the sky to the light blue of the silk foulard, the blue of her eyes grew magically deep.

"There seems to be nothing but you and me in God's universe, Ottilie," said he. She smiled at him. He drew quite close to her.

"If we could only go on straight until we found an enchanted island which we could have as our kingdom."

"The sea must be our kingdom," said Ottilie.

"Or its depths. Shall we dive down and look for the 'ceiling of amber, the pavement of pearl,' and the 'red gold throne in the heart of the sea' for the two of us?"

"We should be happier than in the world," replied the little Princess.

They swam on slowly, dreamily, in silence. The mild waves lapped against their ears and their mouths. The morning sun lay at their backs, and its radiance fell athwart the bay. Through the stillness came the faint echo of a fisherman on the far beach hammering at his boat. Beyond that and the gentle swirl of the water there was no sound. After a while they altered their course so as to reach a small boat that lay at anchor for the convenience of the stronger swimmers. They clambered up and sat on the gunwale, their feet dangling in the sea.

"Is my princess tired?" he asked.

She laughed in merry scorn.

"Tired? Why, I could swim twenty times as far. Do you think I have no muscle? Feel. Don't you know I fence all the winter?"

She braced her bare arm. He felt the muscle; then, relaxing it, by drawing down her wrist, he kissed it very gently.

"Soft and strong—like yourself," said he. Ottilie said nothing, but looked at her white feet through the transparent water. She thought that in letting him kiss her arm and feeling as though he had kissed right through to her heart, she was exhibiting a pitiful lack of strength. Somerset looked at her askance, uncertain. For nothing in the world would he have offended.

"Did you mind?" he whispered.

She shook her head and continued to look at her feet. Somerset felt a great happiness pulse through him.

"If I gave you up," said he, "I should be the poorest spirited dog that ever whined."

"Hush!" she said, putting her hand in his. "Let us think only of the present happiness."

They sat silent for a moment, contemplating the little red-roofed town and Illerville-sur-Mer, which nestled in greenery beyond the white sweep of the beach, and the rococo hotels and the casino, whose cupolas flashed gaudily in the morning sun. From the north-eastern end of the bay stretched a long line of sheer white cliff as far as the eye could reach. Towards the west it was bounded by a narrow headland running far out to sea.

"It looks like a frivolous little Garden of Eden," said Somerset, "but I wish we could never set foot in it again."

"Let us dive in and forget it," said Ottilie.

She slipped into the water. Somerset stood on the gunwale and dived. When he came up and had shaken the salt water from his nostrils, he joined her in two or three strokes.

"Let us go round the point to the little beach the other side."

She hesitated. It would take a long time to swim there, rest, and swim back. Her absence might be noticed. But she felt reckless. Let her drink this hour of happiness to the full. What mattered anything that could follow? She smiled assent, and they struck out steadily for the point. It was good to have the salt smell and the taste of the brine and the pleasant smart of the eyes; and to feel their mastery of the sea. As they threw out their flashing white arms and topped each tiny wave they smiled in exultation. To them it seemed impossible that anyone could drown. For the buoyant hour they were creatures of the element. Now and then a gull circled before them, looked at them unconcerned, as if they were in some way his kindred, and swept off into the distance. A tired white butterfly settled for a moment on Ottilie's head; then lightheartedly fluttered away sea-wards to its doom. They swam on and on, and they neared the point. They slackened for a moment, and he brought his face close to hers.

"If I said 'Let us swim on for ever and ever,' would you do it?"

"Yes," she said, looking deep into his eyes.

After a while they floated restfully. The last question and answer seemed to have brought them a great peace. They were conscious of little save the mystery of the cloudless ether above their faces and the infinite sea that murmured in their ears strange harmonies of Love and Death—harmonies woven from the human yearnings of every shore and the hushed secrets of eternal time. So close were they bodily together that now and then hand touched hand and limb brushed limb. A happy stillness of the soul spread its wings over them and they felt it to be a consecration of their love. Presently his arm sought her, encircled her, brought her head on his shoulder.

"Rest a little," he whispered.

She closed her eyes, surrendered her innocent self to the flooding rapture of the moment. The horrors that awaited her passed from her brain. He had come to the lonely child like a god out of heaven. He had come to the frightened girl like a new terror. He was by her side now, the man whom of all men God had made to accomplish her womanhood and to take all of soul and body, sense and brain that she had to give. Their salt lips met in a first kiss. Words would have broken the spell of the enchantment cast over them by the infinite spaces of sea and sky. They drifted on and on, the subtle, subconscious movement of foot and hand keeping them afloat The little Princess moved closer to him so as to feel more secure around her the circling pressure of his arm. He laughed a man's short, exultant laugh, and gripped her more tightly. Never had he felt his strength more sure. His right arm and his legs beat rhythmically and he felt the pulsation of the measured strokes of his companion's feet and the water swirled past his head, so that he knew they were making way most swiftly. Of exertion there was no sense whatever. He met her eyes fixed through half-shut lids upon his face. Her soft young body melted into his. He lost count of time and space. Now and then a little wave broke over their faces, and they laughed and cleared the brine from their mouths and drew more close together.

"If it wasn't for that," she whispered once, "I could go to sleep."

Soon they felt the gentle rocking of the sea increase and waves broke more often over them. Somerset was the first to note the change. Loosening his hold of Ottilie, he trod water and looked around. To his amazement they were still abreast of the point, but far out to sea. He gazed at it uncomprehendingly for an instant, and then a sudden recollection smote him like a message of death. They had caught the edge of the current against which swimmers were warned, and the current held them in its grip and was sweeping them on while they floated foolishly. A swift glance at Ottilie showed him that she, too, realized the peril. With the outcoming tide it was almost impossible to reach the shore.

"Are you afraid?" he asked.

She shook her head. "Not with you."

He scanned the land and the sea. On the arc of their horizon lay the black hull of a tramp steamer going eastwards. Far away to the west was a speck of white and against the pale sky a film of smoke. Landwards beyond the shimmering water stretched the sunny bay of the casino. Its gilt cupolas shot tiny flames. The green-topped point, its hither side deep in shadow, reached out helplessly for them. Somerset and Ottilie still paused, doing nothing more than keeping themselves afloat, and they felt the current drifting them ever seawards.

"It looks like death," he said gravely. "Are you afraid to die?"

Again Ottilie said, "Not with you."

He looked at the land, and he looked at the white speck and the puff of smoke. Then suddenly his heart leaped with the thrilling inspiration of a wild impossibility.

"Let us leave Illerville and France behind us. Death is as certain either way."

The little Princess looked at him wonderingly.

"Where are we going?"

"To England."

"Anywhere but Illerville," she said.

He struck out seawards, she followed. Each saw the other's face white and set. They had current and tide with them, they swam steadily, undistressed. After a silence she called to him.

"Vince, if we go to our kingdom under the sea, you will take me down in your arms?"

"In a last kiss," he said.

He had heard (as who has not) of Love being stronger than Death. Now he knew its truth. But he swore to himself a great oath that they should not die.

"I shall take my princess to a better kingdom," he said later.

Presently he heard her breathing painfully. She could not hold out much longer.

"I will carry you," he said.

An expert swimmer, she knew the way to hold his shoulders and leave his arms unimpeded. The contact of her light, young form against his body thrilled him and redoubled his strength. He held his head for a second high out of the water and turned half round.

"Do you think I am going to let you die—now?"

The white speck had grown into a white hull, and Somerset was making across its track. To do so he must deflect slightly from the line of the current. His great battle began.

He swam doggedly, steadily, husbanding his strength. If the vessel justified his first flash of inspiration, and if he could reach her, he knew how he should act. As best he could, for it was no time for speech, he told Ottilie his hopes. He felt the spray from her lips upon his cheek, as she said:

"It seems sinful to wish for greater happiness than this."

After that there was utter silence between them. At first he thought exultingly of Bernheim and the Princess Rabomirski, and the rage of their wicked hearts; of the future glorified by his little Princess of the unconquerable soul: of the present's mystic consummation of their marriage. But gradually mental concepts lost sharpness of definition. Sensation began to merge itself into a half-consciousness of stroke on stroke through the illimitable waste. Despite the laughing morning sunshine, the sky became dark and lowering. The weight on his neck grew heavier. At first Ottilie had only rested her arms. Now her feet were as lead and sank behind him; her clasp tightened about his shoulders. He struggled on through a welter of sea and mist. Strange sounds sang in his ears, as if over them had been clamped great sea-shells. At each short breath his throat gulped down bitter water. A horrible pain crept across his chest. His limbs seemed paralyzed and yet he remained above the surface. The benumbed brain wondered at the miracle. . . .

The universe broke upon his vision as a blurred mass of green and white. He recognized it vaguely as his kingdom beneath the sea, and as in a dream he remembered his promise. He slipped round. His lips met Ottilie's. His arms wound round about her, and he sank, holding her tightly clasped.

Strange things happened. He was pulled hither and thither by sea monsters welcoming him to his kingdom. In a confused way he wondered that he could breathe so freely in the depths of the ocean. Unutterable happiness stole upon him. The Kingdom was *real*. His sham Princess would be queen in very truth. But where was she?

He opened his eyes and found himself lying on the deck of a ship. A couple of men were doing funny things to his arms. A rosy-faced man in white ducks and a yachting cap stood over him with a glass of brandy. When he had drunk the spirit, the rosy man laughed.

"That was a narrow shave. We got you just in time. We were nearly right on you. The young woman is doing well. My wife is looking after her."

As soon as he could collect his faculties, Somerset asked,

"Are you the *Mavis?*"

"Yes."

"I felt sure of it. Are you Sir Henry Ransome?"

"That's my name."

"I heard you were expected at Illerville to-day," said Somerset. "That is why I made for you."

The two men who had been doing queer things with his arms wrapped him in a blanket and propped him up against the deck cabin.

"But what on earth were you two young people doing in the middle of the English Channel?" asked the owner of the *Mavis*.

"We were eloping," said Somerset.

The other looked at him for a bewildered moment and burst into a roar of laughter. He turned to the cabin door and disappeared, to emerge a moment afterwards followed by a lady in a morning wrapper.

"What do you think, Marian? It's an elopement."

Somerset smiled at them.

"Have you ever heard of the Princess Rabomirski? You have? Well, this is her daughter. Perhaps you know of the Count Bernheim who is always about with the Princess?"

"I trod on him last winter at Monte Carlo," said Sir Henry Ransome.

"He survives," said Somerset, "and has bought the Princess Ottilie from her mother. He's not going to get her. She belongs to me. My name is Somerset, and I am foreign sub-editor of the *Daily Post*."

"I am very pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Somerset," said Sir Henry with a smile. "And now what can I do for you?"

"If you can lend us some clothes and take us to any part on earth save Illerville-sur-Mer, you will earn our eternal gratitude."

Sir Henry looked doubtful. "We have made our arrangements for Illerville," said he.

His wife broke in.

"If you don't take these romantic beings straight to Southampton, I'll never set my foot upon this yacht again."

"It was you, my dear, who were crazy to come to Illerville."

"Don't you think," said Lady Ransome, "you might provide Mr. Somerset with some dry things?"

Four hours afterwards Somerset sat on deck by the side of Ottilie, who, warmly wrapped, lay on a long chair. He pointed to the far-away coastline of the Isle of Wight.

"Behold our kingdom!" said he.

The little Princess laughed.

"That is not our kingdom."

"Well, what is?"

"Just the little bit of space that contains both you and me," she said.

Souvenir — By EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

JUST a rainy day or two
In a windy tower,
That was all I had of you—
Saving half an hour.

Marred by greeting passing groups
In a cinder walk,
Near some naked blackberry hoops
Dim with purple chalk.

I remember three or four
Things you said in spite,
And an ugly coat you wore,
Plaided black and white.

Just a rainy day or two
And a bitter word.
Why do I remember you
As a singing bird?

La Tinaja Bonita

By OWEN WISTER

Owen Wister

"And it came to pass after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land."—1 Kings xvii. 7.

A PRETTY girl was kneeling on the roof of a flat mud cabin, a harvest of red peppers round her knees. On the ground below her stood a swarthy young man, the bloom on his Mexican cheeks rich and dusky, like her own. His face was irresponsible and winning, and his watching eyes shone upon her with admiration and desire. She on the roof was entertained by her visitor's attention, but unfavorable to it. Through the live-long sunny day she had parried his love-talk with light and complete skill, enjoying herself, and liking him very well, as she had done since they were two children playing together in the Arizona desert. She was quite mistress of the situation, because she was a woman, and he as yet merely a boy; he was only twenty-two; she was almost sixteen. The Mexican man at twenty-two may be as experienced as his Northern brother of thirty, but at sixteen the Mexican woman is also mature, and can competently deal with the man. So this girl had relished the thoughtless morning and noon as they passed; but twice lately she had glanced across the low tree-tops of her garden down the trail, where the cañon descended to the silent plain below.

"I think I must go back now," said the young man, not thinking so. He had a guitar from the cabin.

"Oh!" said she, diverted by his youthful feint. "Well, if you think it is so late." She busied herself with the harvest. Her red handkerchief and strands of her black hair had fallen loosely together from her head to her shoulders. The red peppers were heaped thick, hiding the whole roof, and she stooped among them, levelling them to a ripening layer with buckskin gloves (for peppers sting sharper than mustard), sorting and turning them in the bright sun. The boy looked at her most wistfully.

"It is not precisely late—yet," said he.

"To be sure not," she assented, consulting the sky. "We have still three hours of day."

He brightened as he lounged against a water-barrel. "But after night it is so very dark on the trail to camp," he insincerely objected.

"I never could have believed you were afraid of the dark."

"It is for the horse's legs, Lolita. Of course I fear nothing."

"Bueno! I was sure of it. Do you know, Luis, you have become a man quite suddenly? That mustache will be beautiful in a few years. And you have a good figure."

"I am much heavier than last year," said he. "My arm——"

"I can see, I can see. I am not sure I shall let you kiss me any more. You didn't offer to when you came this morning—and that shows you men perceive things more quickly than we can. But don't go yet. You can lead your horse. His legs will come to no harm, eased of your weight. I should have been lonely today, and you have made it pass so quickly. You have talked so much that my peppers are not half spread."

"We could finish them in five minutes together," said the youth, taking a step.

"Two up here among all these peppers! Oh, no, Luis. We should tread on them, and our ankles would burn all night. If you want to help me, go bring some fresh water. The barrel is almost empty."

But Luis stood ardently gazing up at the roof.

"Very well, then," said Lolita. "If you like this better, finish the peppers, and I'll go for the water."

"Why do you look down the trail so often?" said the baffled love-maker, petulantly.

"Because Uncle Ramon said the American would be coming to-day," the girl replied, softly.

"Was it Uncle Ramon said that? He told you that?"

"Why not?" She shaded her eyes, and looked where the cañon's widening slit gave view of a slant of sand merging fan-spread into a changeless waste of plain. Many watercourses, crooked and straight, came out of the gaps, creasing the sudden Sierra, descending to the flat through bushes and leaning margin trees; but in these empty shapes not a rill tinkled to refresh the silence, nor did a drop slide over the glaring rocks, or even dampen the heated, cheating sand. Lolita strained her gaze at the dry distance, and stooped again to her harvest.

"What does he come here for?" demanded Luis.

"The American? We buy white flour of him sometimes."

"Sometimes! That must be worth his while! He will get rich!" Luis lounged back against his water-barrel, and was silent. As he watched Lolita, serenely working, his silver crescent ear-rings swung a little with the slight tilting of his head, and his fingers, forgotten and unguided by his thoughts, ruffled the strings of the guitar, drawing from it gay, purposeless tendrils of sound. Occasionally, when Lolita knew the song, she would hum it on the roof, inattentively, busy rolling her peppers:

"Soy purita mejicana;
Nada tengo español."

(I am a pure Mexican. I have nothing Spanish about me.) And this melodious inattention of Lolita's Luis felt to be the extreme of slight.

"Have you seen him lately?" he asked, sourly.

"Not very. Not since the last time he came to the mines from Maricopa."

"I heard a man at Gun Sight say he was dead," snapped Luis.

But she made no sign. "That would be a pity," she said, humming gayly.

"Very sad. Uncle Ramon would have to go himself to Maricopa for that white flour."

Pleased with this remark, the youth took to song himself; and there they were like two mischievous birds. Only the bird on the ground was cross with a sense of failure. "El telele se murió," he sang.

"The hunchback is dead.
Ay! Ay! Ay!
And no one could be found to bury him except—"

"Luis, aren't you going to get my water for me?"

"Poco tiempo: I'll bring it directly."

"You have to go to the Tinaja Bonita for it."

The Pretty Spring—or water-hole, or tank—was half a mile from the cabin.

"Well, it's not nice out there in the sun. I like it better in here, where it is pleasant.

"'And no one could be found to bury him except
Five dragoons and a corporal
And the sacristan's cat.'"

Singing resentfully, young Luis stayed in here, where it was pleasant. Bright green branches of fruit-trees and small cottonwoods and a fenced irrigated square of green growing garden hid the tiny adobe home like a nut, smooth and hard and dry, in their clustered midst. The lightest air that could blow among these limber, ready leaves set going at once their varnished twinkling round the house. Their white and dark sides gleamed and went out with chasing lights that quickened the torpid place into a holiday of motion. Closed in by this cool green, you did not have to see or think of Arizona, just outside.

"Where is Uncle Ramon today?" inquired Luis, dropping his music.

She sighed. "He has gone to drive our cattle to a new spring. There is no pasture at the Tinaja Bonita. Our streams and ditches went dry last week. They have never done so in all the years before. I don't know what is going to happen to us." The anxiety in the girl's face seemed to come outward more plainly for a moment, and then recede to its permanent abiding-place.

"There cannot be much water to keep flour-sellers alive on the trail to Maricopa," chirped the bird on the ground.

She made no answer to this. "What are you doing nowadays?" she asked.

"I have been working very hard on the wood contract for the American soldiers," he replied, promptly.

"By Tucson?"

"No. Huachuca."

"Away over there again? I thought you had cut all they wanted last May."

"It is of that enterprise of which I speak, Lolita."

"But it's October now!" Lolita lifted her face, ruddy with stooping, and broke into laughter.

"I do not see why you mock me. No one has asked me to work since."

"Have you asked any one for work?"

"It is not my way to beg."

"Luis, I don't believe you're quite a man yet, in spite of your mustache. You complain there's no money for Mexicans in Arizona because the Americans get it all. Why don't you go back to Sonora, then, and be rich in five minutes? It would sound finely: 'Luis Romero, Merchant, Hermosillo.' Or, perhaps, gold would fall more quickly into your lap at Guaymas. You would live in a big house, perhaps with two stories, and I would come and visit you at Easter—if your wife would allow it." Here Lolita threw a pepper at him.

The guitar grated a few pretty notes; otherwise there was silence.

"And it was Uncle Ramon persuaded them to hire you in May. He told the American contractor you owned a strong burro good for heavy loads. He didn't say much about you," added the little lady.

"Much good it did me! The American contractor-pig retained my wages to pay for the food he supplied us. They charge you extra for starvation, those gringos. They are all pigs. Ah, Lolita, a man needs a wife, so he may strive to win a home for her."

"I have heard men say that they needed a home before they could strive to win a wife for it. But you go about it the other way."

"I am not an American pig, I thank the Virgin! I have none of their gringo customs."

"You speak truly indeed," murmured Lolita.

"It is you who know about them," the boy said, angry like a child. He had seen her eye drawn to the trail again as by a magnet. "They say you prefer gringos to your own people."

"Who dares say that?"

The elated Luis played loudly on the guitar. He had touched her that time.

But Lolita's eye softened at the instant of speaking, and she broke into her sweet laugh. "There!" she said, recapturing the situation; "is it not like old times for you and me to be fighting."

"Me? I am not fighting."

"You relieve me."

"I do not consider a gringo worth my notice."

"Sensible boy! You speak as wisely as one who has been to school in a large city. Luis, do you remember the day Uncle Ramon locked me up for riding on the kicking burro, and you came and unlocked me when uncle was gone? You took me walking, and lost us both in the mountains. We were really only a little, little way from home, but I thought we had got into another country where they eat children. I was six, and I beat you for losing me, and cried, and you were big, and you kissed me till I stopped crying. Do you remember?"

"No."

"Don't you remember?"

"I don't remember child's tricks."

"Luis, I have come to a conclusion. You are still young enough for me to kiss quite safely. Every time you fight with me—I shall kiss you. Won't you get me some fresh water now?"

He lounged, sulky, against his barrel.

"Come, querido! Must I go all that way myself? Well, then, if you intend to stand and glare at me till the moon rises— Ah! he moves!"

Luis laid the guitar gradually down, and gradually lifting a pail in which the dipper rattled with emptiness, he proceeded to crawl on his journey.

"You know that is not the one we use, muchacho," (little boy), remarked Lolita.

"Keep your kisses for your gringo," the water-carrier growled, with his back to her.

"I shall always save some for my little cousin."

The pail clattered on the stones, and the child stopped crawling. She on the roof stared at this performance for an open-mouthed moment, gloves idle among the spicy peppers. Then, laughing, she sprang to her feet, descended, and, catching up the water-jar (the olla de agua), overtook him, and shook it in his face with the sweetest derision. "Now we'll go together," said she, and started gayly through the green trees and the garden. He followed her, two paces behind, half ashamed, and gazing at her red handkerchief, and the black hair blowing a little; thus did they cross the tiny cool home acre through the twinkling pleasantness of the leaves, and pass at once outside the magic circle of irrigation into Arizona's domain, among a prone herd of carcasses upon the ground—dead cattle, two seasons dead now, hunted to this sanctuary by the drought, killed in the sanctuary by cold water.

A wise, quiet man, with a man's will, may sometimes after three days of thirst still hold grip enough upon his slipping mind to know, when he has found the water, that he must not drink it, must only dampen his lips and tongue in a drop-by-drop fashion until he has endured the passing of many slow, insidious hours. Even a wise man had best have a friend by his side then, who shall fight and tear him from the perilous excesses that he craves, knock him senseless if he cannot pin him down; but cattle know nothing of drop by drop, and you cannot pin down a hundred head that have found water after three days. So these hundred had drunk themselves swollen and died. Cracked hide and white bone they lay, brown, dry, gaping humps straddled stiff askew in the last convulsion; and over them presided Arizona—silent, vast, all sunshine everlasting.

Luis saw these corpses that had stumbled to their fate, and he remembered; with Lolita in those trees all day, he had forgotten for a while. He pointed to the wide-strewn sight, familiar, monotonous as misfortune. "There will be many more," he said. "Another rainy season is gone without doing anything for the country. It cannot rain now for another year, Lolita."

"God help us and our cattle, and travellers!" she whispered.

Luis musingly repeated a saying of the country about the Tinaja Bonita:

> "When you see the Black Cross dry,
> Fill the wagon cisterns high"

—a doggerel in homely Spanish metre, unwritten mouth-to-mouth wisdom, stable as a proverb, enduring through generations of unrecorded wanderers, that repeated it for a few years, and passed beneath the desert.

"But the Black Cross has never been dry yet," Luis said.

"You have not seen it lately," said Lolita.

"Lolita! do you mean—" He looked in her troubled eyes, and they went on in silence together. They left behind them the bones and the bald level on which they lay, and came to where the cañon's broader descent quickened until they sank below that sight of the cattle, and for a time below the home and trees. They went down steeply by cactus and dry rock to a meeting of several cañons opening from side rifts in the Sierra, furrowing the main valley's mesa with deep watercourses that brought no water. Finding their way in this lumpy meeting-ground, they came upon the lurking-place of the Tinaja Bonita. They stood above it at the edge of a pitch of rock, watching the motionless crystal of the pool.

"How well it hides down there in its own cañon!" said Luis. "How pretty and clear! But there's plenty of water, Lolita."

"Can you see the Black Cross?"

"Not from here."

They began descending around the sides of the crumbled slate-rock face that tilted too steep for foothold.

"The other well is dry, of course," said Lolita. In the slaty, many-ledged formation a little lower down the cañon, towards the peep of outlying open country which the cloven hills let in, was a second round hole, twin of the first. Except after storms, water was never in this place, and it lay dry as a kiln nine-tenths of the year. But in size and depth and color, and the circular fashion of its shaft, which seemed man's rather than nature's design, it might have been the real Tinaja's reflection, conjured in some evil mirror where everything was faithfully represented except the water.

"It must have been a real well once," said Luis.

"Once, yes."

"And what made it go dry?"

"Who knows?"

"How strange it should be the lower well that failed, Lolita!"

The boy and girl were climbing down slowly, drawing near each other as they reached the bottom of the hollow. The peep of open country was blocked, and the tall tops of the mountains were all of the outer world to be seen down here below the mesa's level. The silence was like something older than this world, like the silence of space before any worlds were made.

"Do you believe it ever can go dry?" asked Luis. They were now on the edge of the Tinaja.

"Father Rafael says that it is miraculous," said the girl, believingly.

Opposite, and everywhere except where they were, the walls went sheer down, not slate-coloured, but white, with a sudden up-cropping formation of brick-shaped stones. These also were many-layered and crumbling, cracking off into the pool if the hand hung or the foot weighed on them. No safe way went to the water but at this lower side, where the riven, tumbled white blocks shelved easily to the bottom; and Luis and Lolita looked down these natural stairs at the portent in the well. In that white formation shot up from the earth's bowels, arbitrary and irrelevant amid the surrounding alien layers of slate, four black stones were lodged as if built into the wall by some hand—four small stones shaping a cross, black against the white, symmetrical and plain.

"It has come farther—more uncovered since yesterday," Lolita whispered.

"Can the Tinaja sink altogether?" repeated Luis. The arms of the cross were a measurable space above the water-line, and he had always seen it entirely submerged.

"How could it sink?" said Lolita, simply. "It will stop when the black stones are wholly dry."

"You believe Father Rafael," Luis said always in a low voice; "but it was only Indians, after all, who told the mission fathers at the first."

"That was very long ago," said she, "and there has always been water in the Tinaja Bonita."

Boy and girl had set the jar down, and forgotten it and why they had come. Luis looked uneasily at the circular pool, and up from this creviced middle of the cañon to the small high tops of the mountains rising in the free sky.

"This is an evil place," he said. "As for the water—no one, no three can live long enough to be sure."

But it was part of Lolita's religion. "I am sure," said she.

The young Mexican's eyes rested on the face of the girl beside him, more beautiful just then with some wave of secret fear and faith.

"Come away with me, Lolita!" he pleaded, suddenly. "I can work. I can be a man. It is fearful for you to live here alone."

"Alone, Luis?" His voice had called her from her reverie back to her gay, alert self. "Do you consider Uncle Ramon nobody to live with?"

"Yes. Nobody—for you."

"Promise me never to tell that to uncle. He is so considerate that he might make me marry somebody for company. And then, you know, my husband would be certain to be stupid about your coming to see me, querido."

"Why do you always mock me, Lolita?"

"Mock you? What a fancy! Oh, see how the sun's going! If we do not get our water, your terrible Tinaja will go dry before supper. Come, Luis, I carried the olla. Must I do everything?"

He looked at her disconsolate. "Ah!" he vibrated, revelling in deep imaginary passion.

"Go! go!" she cried, pushing him. "Take your olla."

Upon the lightest passing puff of sentiment the Southern breast can heave with every genuine symptom of storm, except wreck. Of course she stirred his gregarious heart. Was she not lovely and he twenty-two? He went down the natural stairs and came slowly up with the water, stopping a step below her. "Lolita," he said, "don't you love me at all? not a very little?"

"You are my dearest, oldest friend, Luis," she said, looking at him with such full sweetness that his eyes fell. "But why do you pretend five beans make ten?"

"Of course they only make ten with gringos."

She held up a warning finger.

"Oh yes, oh yes! Strangers make fine lovers!" With this he swelled to a fond, dangerous appearance, and muttered, "It is not difficult to kill a man, Lolita."

"Fighting! after what I told you!" Lolita stooped and kissed her cousin Luis, and he instantly made the most of that chance.

"As often as you please," he said, as she released herself angrily, and then a stroke of sound struck their two hearts still. They jumped apart, trembling. Some of the rock slide had rattled down and plunged into the Tinaja with a gulping resonance. Loitering strings of sand strewed after it, and the boy's and girl's superstitious eyes looked up from the ringed, waving water to the ledge. Lolita's single shriek of terror turned to joy as she uttered it.

"I thought—I thought you would not come!" she cried out.

The dismounted horseman above made no sign of understanding her words. He stepped carefully away from the ledge his foot had crumbled, and they saw him using his rifle like a staff, steadying its stock in successive niches, and so working back to his horse. There he slid the rifle into its leather sling along the left side of his saddle.

"So he is not dead," murmured Luis, "and we need not live alone."

"Come down!" the girl called, and waved her hand. But the new-comer stood by his horse like an apparition.

"Perhaps he is dead, after all," Luis said. "You might say some of the Mass, only he was a heretic. But his horse is Mexican, and a believer."

Lolita had no eyes or ears for Luis any more. He prattled away on the stone stairs of the Tinaja, flippant after a piercing shock of fear. To him, unstrung by the silence and the Black Cross and the presence of the sinking pool, the stone had crashed like a clap of sorcery, and he had started and stared to see—not a spirit, but a man, dismounted from his horse, with a rifle. At that his heart clutched him like talons, and in the flashing spasm of his mind came a picture—smoke from the rifle, and himself bleeding in the dust. Costly love-making! For Luis did not believe the rifle to have been brought to the ledge there as a staff, and he thanked the Virgin for the stone that fell and frightened him, and made him move suddenly. He had chattered himself cool now, and ready. Lolita was smiling at the man on the hill, glowing without concealment of her heart's desire.

"Come down!" she repeated. "Come round the side." And, lifting the olla, she tapped it, and signed the way to him.

"He has probably brought too much white flour for Uncle Ramon to care to climb more than he must," said Luis. But the man had stirred at last from his sentinel stillness, and began leading his horse down. Presently he was near enough for Luis to read his face. "Your gringo is a handsome fellow, certainly," he commented. "But he does not like me today."

"Like you! He doesn't think about you," said Lolita.

"Ha! That's your opinion?"

"It is also his opinion—if you'll ask him."

"He is afraid of Cousin Luis," stated the youth.

"Cousin grasshopper! He could eat you—if he could see you."

"There are other things in this world besides brute muscle, Lolita. Your gringo thinks I am worth notice, if you do not."

"How little he knows you!"

"It is you he does not know very well," the boy said, with a pang.

The scornful girl stared.

"Oh, the innocent one!" sneered Luis. "Grasshopper, indeed! Well, one man can always recognize another, and the women don't know much."

But Lolita had run off to meet her chosen lover. She did not stop to read his face. He was here; and as she hurried towards him she had no thought except that he was come at last. She saw his eyes and lips, and to her they were only the eyes and lips that she had longed for. "You have come just in time," she called out to him. At the voice, he looked at her one instant, and looked away; but the nearer sight of her sent a tide of scarlet across his face. His actions he could control, his bearing, and the steadiness of his speech, but not the coursing of his blood. It must have been a minute he had stood on the ledge above, getting a grip of himself. "Luis was becoming really afraid that he might have to do some work," continued Lolita, coming up the stony hill. "You know Luis?"

"I know him."

"You can fill your two canteens and carry the olla for us," she pursued, arriving eagerly beside him, her face lifted to her strong, tall lover.

"I can."

At this second chill of his voice, and his way of meeting her when she had come running, she looked at him bewildered, and the smile fluttered on her lips and left them. She walked beside him, talking no more; nor could she see his furtive other hand mutely open and shut, helping him keep his grip.

Luis also looked at the man who had taken Lolita's thoughts away from him and all other men. "No, indeed, he does not understand her very well," he repeated, bitter in knowing the man's suspicion and its needlessness. Something—disappointment, it may be—had wrought more reality in the young Mexican's easy-going love. "And she likes this gringo because—because he is light-coloured!" he said, watching the American's bronzed Saxon face, almost as young as his own, but of sterner stuff. Its look left him no further doubt, and he held himself forewarned. The American came to the bottom, powerful, blue-eyed, his moustache golden, his cheek clean-cut, and beaten to shining health by the weather. He swung his blue-overalled leg over his saddle and rode to the Tinaja, with a short greeting to the watcher, while the pale Lolita unclasped the canteen straps and brought the water herself, brushing coldly by Luis to hook the canteens to the saddle again. This slighting touch changed the Mexican boy's temper to diversion and malice. Here were mountains from mole-hills! Here were five beans making ten with a vengeance!

"Give me that," said the American; and Luis handed up the water-jar to him with such feline politeness that the American's blue eyes filled with fire and rested on him for a doubtful second. But Luis was quite ready, and more diverted than ever over the suppressed violence of his Saxon friend. The horseman wheeled at once, and took a smooth trail out to the top of the mesa, the girl and boy following.

As the three went silent up the cañon, Luis caught sight of Lolita's eyes shining with the hurt of her lover's rebuff, and his face sparkled with further mischief. "She has been despising me all day," he said to himself. "Very well, very well.—Señor

Don Ruz," he began aloud, elaborately, "we are having a bad drought."

The American rode on, inspecting the country.

"I know at least four sorts of kisses," reflected the Mexican trifler. "But there! very likely to me also they would appear alike from the top of a rock." He looked the American over, the rifle under his leg, his pistol, and his knife. "How clumsy these gringos are when it's about a girl!" thought Luis. "Any fool could fool them. Now I should take much care to be friendly if ever I did want to kill a man in earnest. Comical gringo!—Yes, very dry weather, Don Ruz. And the rainy season gone!"

The American continued to inspect the country, his supple, flannel-shirted back hinting no interest in the talk.

"Water is getting scarce, Don Ruz," persisted the gadfly, lighting again. "Don Ramon's spring does not run now, and so we must come to the Tinaja Bonita, you see. Don Ramon removed the cattle yesterday. Everybody absent from home, except Lolita." Luis thought he could see his Don Ruz listening to that last piece of gossip, and his smile over himself and his skill grew more engaging. "Lolita has been telling me all to-day that even the Tinaja will go dry."

"It was you said that!" exclaimed the brooding, helpless Lolita.

"So I did. And it was you said no. Well, we found something to disagree about." The man in the flannel shirt was plainly attending to his tormentor. "No sabe cuantos son cinco," Luis whispered, stepping close to Lolita. "Your gringo could not say boo to a goose just now." Lolita drew away from her cousin, and her lover happened to turn his head slightly, so that he caught sight of her drawing away. "But what do you say yourself, Don Ruz?" inquired Luis, pleased at this slight coincidence—"will the Tinaja go dry, do you think?"

"I expect guessing won't interfere with the water's movements much," finally remarked Don Ruz—Russ Genesmere. His drawl and the body in his voice were not much like the Mexican's light fluency. They were music to Lolita, and her gaze went to him once more, but he got no answer. The bitter Luis relished this too.

"You are right, Don Ruz. Guessing is idle. Yet how can we help wondering about this mysterious Tinaja? I am sure that you can never have seen so much of the cross out of water. Lolita says—"

"So that's that place," said Genesmere, roughly.

Luis looked inquiring.

"Down there," Genesmere explained, with a jerk of his head back along the road they had come.

Luis was surprised that Don Ruz, who knew this country so well, should never have seen the Tinaja Bonita until to-day.

"I'd have seen it if I'd had any use for it," said Genesmere.

"To be sure, it lay off the road of travel," Luis assented. And of course Don Ruz knew all that was needful—how to find it. He knew what people said—did he not? Father Rafael, Don Ramon, everybody? Lolita perhaps had told him? And that if the cross ever rose entirely above the water, that was a sign all other water-holes in the region were empty. Therefore it was a good warning for travellers, since by it they could judge how much water to carry on a journey. But certainly he and Lolita were surprised to see how low the Tinaja had fallen to-day. No doubt what the Indians said about the great underground snake that came and sucked all the wells dry in the lower country, and in consequence was nearly satisfied before he reached the Tinaja, was untrue.

To this tale of Jesuits and peons the American listened with unexpressed contempt, caring too little to mention that he had heard some of it before, or even to say that in the last few days he had crossed the desert from Tucson and found water on the trail as usual where he expected. He rode on, leading the way slowly up the cañon, suffering the glib Mexican to talk unanswered. His own suppressed feelings still smouldered in his eye, still now and then knotted the muscles in his cheeks; but of Luis's chatter he said his whole opinion in one word, a single English syllable, which he uttered quietly for his own benefit. It also benefited Luis. He was familiar with that order of English, and, overhearing, he understood. It consoled the Mexican to feel how easily he could play this simple, unskilful American.

They passed through the hundred corpses to the home and the green trees, where the sun was setting against the little shaking leaves.

"So you will camp here to-night, Don Ruz?" said Luis, perceiving the American's pack-mules. Genesmere had come over from the mines at Gun Sight, found the cabin empty, and followed Lolita's and her cousin's trail, until he had suddenly seen the two from that ledge above the Tinaja. "You are always welcome to what we have at our camp, you know, Don Ruz. All that is mine is yours also. To-night it is probably frijoles. But no doubt you have white flour here." He was giving his pony water from the barrel, and next he threw the saddle on and mounted. "I must be going back, or they will decide I am not coming till to-morrow, and quickly eat my supper." He spoke jauntily from his horse, arm akimbo, natty short jacket put on for to-day's courting, grey steeple-hat silver-embroidered, a spruce, pretty boy, not likely to toil severely at wood contracts so long as he could hold soul and body together and otherwise be merry, and the hand of that careless arm soft on his pistol, lest Don Ruz should abruptly dislike him too much; for Luis contrived a tone for his small-talk that would have disconcerted the most sluggish, sweet to his own mischievous ears, healing to his galled self-esteem. "Good-night, Don Ruz. Good-night, Lolita. Perhaps I shall come to-morrow, mañana en la mañana."

"Good-night," said Lolita, harshly, which increased his joy; "I cannot stop you from passing my house."

Genesmere said nothing, but sat still on his white horse, hands folded upon the horns of his saddle, and Luis, always engaging and at ease, ambled away with his song about the hunchback. He knew that the American was not the man to wait until his enemy's back was turned.

"El telele se murió
A enterrar ya le llevan—"

The tin-pan Mexican voice was empty of melody and full of rhythm.

"Ay! Ay! Ay!"

Lolita and Genesmere stood as they had stood, not very near each other, looking after him and his gaiety that the sun shone bright upon. The minstrel truly sparkled. His clothes were more elegant than the American's shirt and overalls, and his face luxuriant with thoughtlessness. Like most of his basking Southern breed, he had no visible means of support, and nothing could worry him for longer than three minutes. Frijoles do not come high, out-of-doors is good enough to sleep in if you or your friend have no roof, and it is not a hard thing to sell some other man's horses over the border and get a fine coat and hat.

"Cinco dragones y un cabo,
Oh, no no no no no!
Y un gato de sacristan."

Coat and hat were getting up the cañon's side among the cactus, the little horse climbing the trail shrewdly with his light-weight rider; and dusty, unmusical Genesmere and sullen Lolita watched them till they went behind a bend, and nothing remained but the tin-pan song singing in Genesmere's brain. The gadfly had stung more poisonously than he knew, and still Lolita and Genesmere stood watching nothing, while the sun—the sun of Arizona at the day's transfigured immortal passing—became a crimson coal in a lake of saffron, burning and beating like a heart, till the desert seemed no longer dead, but only asleep, and breathing out wide rays of rainbow colour that rose expanded over earth and sky.

Then Genesmere spoke his first volunteered word to Lolita. "I didn't shoot because I was afraid of hitting you," he said. So now she too realized clearly. He had got off his horse above the Tinaja to kill Luis during that kiss. Complete innocence had made her stupid and slow.

"Are you going to eat?" she inquired.

"Oh yes. I guess I'll eat."

She set about the routine of fire-lighting and supper as if it had been Uncle Ramon, and this evening like all evenings. He, not so easily, and with small blunderings that he cursed, attended to his horse and mules, coming in at length to sit against the wall where she was cooking.

"It is getting dark," said Lolita. So he found the lamp and lighted it, and sat down again.

"I've never hurt a woman," he said, presently, the vision of his rifle's white front sight held steady on the two below the ledge once more flooding his brain. He spoke slowly.

"Then you have a good chance now," said Lolita, quickly, busy over her cooking. In her Southern ears such words sounded a threat. It was not in her blood to comprehend this Northern way of speaking and walking and sitting, and being one thing outside and another inside.

"And I wouldn't hurt a woman"—he was hardly talking to her—"not if I could think in time."

"Men do it," she said, with the same defiance. "But it makes talk."

"Talk's nothing to me," said Genesmere, flaming to fierceness. "Do I care for opinions? Only my own." The fierceness passed from his face, and he was remote from her again. Again he fell to musing aloud, changing from Mexican to his mother-tongue. "I wouldn't want to have to remember a thing like that." He stretched himself, and leaned his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands, the yellow hair hiding his fingers. She had often seen him do this when he felt lazy; it was not a sign by which she could read a spiritual standstill, a quivering wreck of faith and passion. "I have to live a heap of my life alone," the lounger went on. "Journey alone. Camp alone. Me and my mules. And I don't propose to have thoughts a man should be ashamed of." Lolita was throwing a cloth over the table and straightening it. "I'm twenty-five, and I've laid by no such thoughts yet. Church folks might say different."

"It is ready," said Lolita, finishing her preparations.

He looked up, and, seeing the cloth and the places set, pulled his chair to the table, and passively took the food she brought him. She moved about the room between shelves and fire, and, when she had served him, seated herself at leisure to begin her own supper. Uncle Ramon was a peon of some substance, doing business in towns and living comparatively well. Besides the shredded spiced stew of meat, there were several dishes for supper. Genesmere ate the meal deliberately, attending to his plate and cup, and Lolita was as silent as himself, only occasionally looking at him; and in time his thoughts came to the surface again in words. He turned and addressed Lolita in Mexican: "So, you see, you saved his life down there."

She laid her fork down and gave a laugh, hard and harsh; and she said nothing, but waited for what next.

"You don't believe that. You don't know that. He knows that."

She laughed again, more briefly.

"You can tell him so. From me."

Replies seemed to struggle together on Lolita's lips and hinder each other's escaping.

"And you can tell him another thing. He wouldn't have stopped. He'd have shot. Say that. From me. He'd have shot, because he's a Spaniard, like you."

"You lie!" This side issue in some manner set free the girl's tongue, "I am not Spanish. I care nothing for Spaniards or what they may do. I am Mexican, and I waited to see you kill him. I wanted to watch his blood. But you! you listened to his false talk, and believed him, and let him go. I save his life? Go after him now! Do it with this knife, and tell him it is Lolita's. But do not sit there and talk any more. I have had enough of men's talk to-day. Enough, enough, enough!"

Genesmere remained in his chair, while she had risen to her feet. "I suppose," he said, very slowly, "that folks like you folks can't understand about love—not about the kind I mean."

Lolita's two hands clinched the edge of the table, and she called upon her gods. "Believe it, then! Believe it! And kill me, if that will make you contented. But do not talk any more. Yes, he told me that he loved me. Yes, I kissed him; I have kissed him hundreds of times, always, since before I can remember. And I had been laughing at him to-day, having nothing in my heart but you. All day it had rejoiced me to hear his folly and think of you, and think how little he knew, and how you would come soon. But your folly is worse. Kill me in this house to-night, and I will tell you, dying, that I love you, and that it is you who are the fool."

She looked at her lover, and seeing his face and eyes she had sought to bring before her in the days that she had waited for him, she rushed to him.

"Lolita!" he whispered. "Lolita!"

But she could only sob as she felt his arms and his lips. And when presently he heard her voice again murmuring brokenly to him in the way that he knew and had said over in his mind and dwelt upon through the desert stages he had ridden, he trembled, and with savage triumph drew her close, and let his doubt and the thoughts that had chilled and changed him sink deep beneath the flood of this present rapture. "My life!" she said. "Toda mi vida! All my life!" Through the open door the air of the cañon blew cool into the little room overheated by the fire and the lamp, and in time they grew aware of the endless rustling of the trees, and went out and stood in the darkness together, until it ceased to be darkness, and their eyes could discern the near and distant shapes of their world. The sky was black and splendid, with four or five planets too bright for lesser stars to show, and the promontories of the keen mountains shone almost as in moonlight. A certain hill down towards the Tinaja and its slate ledge caught Genesmere's eye, and Lolita felt him shudder, and she wound her arm more tightly about him.

"What is it?" she said.

"Nothing." He was staring at the hill. "Nothing," he replied to himself.

"Dreamer, come!" said Lolita, pulling

him. "It is cold here in the night—and if you choose to forget, I choose you shall remember."

"What does this girl want now?"

"The cards! our cards!"

"Why, to be sure!" He ran after her, and joy beat in her heart at the fleet kiss he tried for and half missed. She escaped into the room, laughing for delight at her lover's being himself again—his own right self that she talked with always in the long days she waited alone.

"Take it!" she cried out, putting the guitar at him so he should keep his distance. "There! now you have broken it, songless Americano! You shall buy me another." She flung the light instrument, that fell in a corner with a loud complaint of all the strings together, collapsing to a blurred hollow humming, and silence.

"Now you have done it!" said Genesmere, mock serious.

"I don't care. I am glad. He played on that to-day. He can have it, and you shall give me a new one.

"Yo soy purita mejicana;
Nada tengo español,"

sang the excited, breathless Lolita to her American, and seated herself at the table, beginning a brisk shuffle of a dim, dog-eared pack. "You sit there!" She nodded to the opposite side of the table. "Very well, move the lamp then." Genesmere had moved it because it hid her face from him. "He thinks I cheat! Now, Señor Don Ruz, it shall be for the guitar. Do you hear?"

"Too many pesos, señorita."

"Oh, oh! the miser!"

"I'm not going broke on any señoritas—not even my own girl!"

"Have you no newer thing than poverty to tell me? Now if you look at me like that I cannot shuffle properly."

"How am I to look, please?" He held his glance on her.

"Not foolish like a boy. There, take them, then!" She threw the cards at him, blushing and perturbed by his eyes, while he scrambled to punish her across the table.

"Generous one!" she said. "Ardent pretender! He won't let me shuffle because he fears to lose."

"You shall have a silk handkerchief with flowers on it," said he, shuffling.

"I have two already. I can see you arranging those cards, miser!"

It was the custom of their meetings, whether at the cabin or whether she stole out to his camp, to play for the token he should bring for her when he next came from town. She named one thing, he some other, and the cards judged between them. And to see Genesmere in these hours, his oldest friend could not have known him any more than he knew himself. Never had a woman been for him like Lolita, conjuring the Saxon to forget himself and bask openly in that Southern joy and laughter of the moment.

"Say my name!" he ordered; and at the child effort she made over "Russ" he smiled with delight. "Again!" he exclaimed, bending to catch her *R* and the whole odd little word she made. "More!"

"No," pouted the girl, and beat at him, blushing again.

"Make your bet!" he said, laying out the Mexican cards before him. "Quick! Which shall it be?"

"The caballo. Oh, my dear, I wanted to die this afternoon, and now I am so happy!"

It brought the tears to her eyes, and almost to his, till he suddenly declared she had stolen a card, and with that they came to soft blows and laughing again. So did the two sit and wrangle, seizing the pack out of turn, feigning rage at being cheated, until he juggled to make her win three times out of five; and when chance had thus settled for the guitar, they played for kisses, and so forgot the cards at last. And at last Genesmere began to speak of the next time, and Lolita to forbid such talk as that so soon. She laid her hand over his lips, at which he yielded for a little, and she improvised questions of moment to ask him, without time for stopping, until she saw that this would avail no longer. Then she sighed, and let him leave her to see to his animals, while she lighted the fire again to make breakfast for him. At that parting meal an anxiety slowly came in her face, and it was she that broke their silence after a while.

"Which road do you go this time, querido?" she asked.

"Tucson, Maricopa, and then straight here to you."

"From Maricopa? That is longer across the desert."

"Shorter to my girl."

"I—I wish you would not come that way."

"Why?"

"That—that desert!"

"There's desert both ways—all ways. The other road puts an extra week between you and me."

"Yes, yes. I have counted."

"What is all this, Lolita?"

Once more she hesitated, smiling uneasily beneath his scrutiny. "Yo no sé" (I don't know). "You will laugh. You do not believe the things that I believe. The Tinaja Bonita——"

"That again!"

"Yes," she half whispered. "I am afraid."

He looked at her steadily.

"Return the same road by Tucson," she urged. "That way is only half so much desert, and you can carry water from Poso Blanco. Do not trust the Coyote Wells. They are little and shallow, and if the Black Cross— Oh, my darling, if you do not believe, do this for me because you love me, love me!"

He did not speak at once. The two had risen, and stood by the open door, where the dawn was entering and mixing with the lamp. "Because I love you," he repeated at length, slowly, out of his uncertain thoughts.

She implored him, and he studied her in silence.

Suddenly hardness stamped his face. "I'll come by Tucson, then—since I love you!" And he walked at once out of the door. She followed him to his horse, and there reached up and pulled him round to her, locking her fingers behind his neck. Again his passion swept him, and burned the doubt from his eyes. "I believe you love me!" he broke out.

"Ah, why need you say that?"

"Adios, chiquita." He was smiling, and she looked at his white teeth and golden moustache. She felt his hands begin to unlock her own.

"Not yet—not yet!"

"Adios, chiquita."

"O mi querido!" she murmured; "with you I forget day and night!"

"Bastante!" He kissed her once for all.

"Good-bye! good-bye! Mis labios van estar frios hasta que tu los toques otra vez" (My lips will be cold until you touch them again).

He caught her two hands, as if to cling to something. "Say that once more. Tell me that once more."

She told him with all her heart and soul, and he sprang into his saddle. She went beside him through the cold, pale-lighted trees to the garden's edge, and there stood while he took his way across the barren ground among the carcasses. She watched the tip of his moustache that came beyond the line of his cheek, and when she was farther, his whole strong figure, while the clack of the hoofs on the dead ground grew fainter. When the steeper fall of the cañon hid him from her she ran to the house, and from its roof among her peppers she saw him come into sight again below, the wide, foreshortened slant of ground between them, the white horse and dark rider and the mules, until they became a mere line of something moving, and so vanished into the increasing day.

Genesmere rode, and took presently to smoking. Coming to a sandy place, he saw prints of feet and of a shod horse in the trail heading the other way. That was his own horse, and the feet were Lolita's and Luis's—the record and the memory of yesterday afternoon. He looked up from the trail to the hills, now lambent with violet and shifting orange, and their shapes as they moved out into his approaching view were the shapes of yesterday afternoon. He came soon to the forking of the trails, one for Tucson and the other leading down into the lumpy country, and here again were the prints in the sand, the shod horse, the man and the woman, coming in from the lumpy country that lay to the left; and Genesmere found himself stock-still by the forking trails, looking at his watch. His many-journeyed mules knew which was the Tucson trail, and, not understanding why he turned them from their routine, walked asunder, puzzled at being thus driven in the wrong direction. They went along a strange up-and-down path, loose with sliding stones, and came to an end at the ledge of slate, and stood about on the tricky footing looking at their master and leaning their heads together. The master sat quiet on his horse, staring down where a circular pool lay below; and the sun rose everywhere, except in his mind. So far had he come yesterday with that mind easy over his garnered prosperity, free and soaring on its daily flight among the towers of his hopes—those constructions that are common with men who grow fond: the air-castle rises and reaches, possessing the architect, who cherishes its slow creation with hourly changes and additions to the plan. A house was part of Genesmere's castle, a home with a wife inside, and no more camping alone. Thus far, to this exact ledge, the edifice had gone forward fortunately, and then a blast had crumbled house and days to come into indistinguishable dust. The heavy echo jarred in Genesmere, now that he had been lured to look again upon the site of the disaster, and a lightning violence crossed his face. He saw the two down there as they had stood, the man with his arms holding the woman, before the falling stone had startled them. Were the Mexican present now in the flesh, he would destroy him just for what he had tried to do. If she were true— She was true—that was no thanks to the Mexican. Genesmere was sorry second thoughts had spared that fellow yesterday, and he looked at his watch again. It was time to be starting on the Tucson trail, and the mules alertly turned their steps from the Tinaja Bonita. They could see no good in having come here. Evidently it was not to get water. Why, then? What use was there in looking down a place into a hole? The mules gave it up. Genesmere himself thought the Tinaja poorly named. It was not pretty. In his experience of trail and cañon he knew no other such hole. He was not aware of the twin, dried up, thirty yards below, and therefore only half knew the wonders of the spot.

He rode back to the forks across the rolling steepness, rebuilding the castle; then, discovering something too distant to be sure about, used his glass quickly. It was another rider, also moving slowly among the knolls and gullies of the mesa, and Genesmere could not make him out. He was going towards the cabin, but it was not the same horse that Luis had ridden yesterday. This proved nothing, and it would be easy to circle and see the man closer—only not worth the trouble. Let the Mexican go to the cabin. Let him go every day. He probably would, if she permitted. Most likely she would tell him to keep away from her. She ought to. She might hurt him if he annoyed her. She was a good shot with a pistol. But women work differently from men—and then she was Mexican. She might hide her feelings and make herself pleasant for three weeks. She would tell him when he returned, and they would laugh together over how she had fooled this Luis. After all, shooting would have been too much punishment. A man with a girl like Lolita must expect to find other men after her. It depends on your girl. You find that out when you go after other men's girls. When a woman surely loves some other man she will not look at you. And Lolita's love was a sure thing. A woman can say love and a man will believe her—until he has experienced the genuine article once; after that he can always tell. And to have a house, with her inside waiting for you! Such a turn was strange luck for a man, not to be accounted for. If anybody had said last year—why, as late as the 20th of last March—that settling down was what you were coming to—and now—Genesmere wondered how he could ever have seen anything in riding a horse up and down the earth and caring nothing for what next. "No longer alone!" he said aloud, suddenly, and surprised the white horse.

The song about the hunchback and the sacristan's cat stirred its rhythm in his mind. He was not a singer, but he could think the tune, trace it, naked of melody, in the dry realm of the brain. And it was a diversion to piece out the gait of the phantom notes, low after high, quick after slow, until they went of themselves. Lolita would never kiss Luis again; would never want to—not even as a joke. Genesmere turned his head back to take another look at the rider, and there stood the whole mountains like a picture, and himself far out in the flat country, and the bare sun in the sky. He had come six miles on the road since he had last noticed. Six miles, and the air-castle was rebuilt and perfect, with no difference from the old one except its foundation, which was upon sand. To see the unexpected plain around him, and the islands of blue, sharp peaks lying in it, drove the tune from his head, and he considered the well-known country, reflecting that man could not be meant to live here. The small mountain-islands lay at all distances, blue in a dozen ways, amid the dead calm of this sand archipelago. They rose singly from it, sheer and sudden, toothed and triangled like icebergs, hot as stoves. The channels to the north, Santa Rosa way, opened broad and yellow, and ended without shore upon the clean horizon, and to the south narrowed with lagoons into Sonora. Genesmere could just see one top of the Sierra de la Quitabac jutting up from below the earth-line, splitting the main channel, the faintest blue of all. They could be having no trouble over their water down there, with the Laguna Esperanca and the Poso de Mazis. Genesmere killed some more of the way rehearsing the trails and water-holes of this country, known to him like his pocket; and by-and-by food-cooking and mule-feeding and the small machine repetitions of a camp and a journey brought the Quijotoa Mountains behind him to replace Gun Sight and the Sierra de la Naril; and later still the Cababi hid the Quijotoa, and Genesmere counted days and nights to the good, and was at the Coyote Wells.

These were holes in rocks, but shallow, as Lolita said. No shallower than ordinary, however; he would see on the way back if they gave signs of failing. No wonder if they did, with this spell of drought—but why mix up a plain thing with a lot of nonsense about a black cross down a hole? Genesmere was critically struck with the words of the tune he now noticed steadily running in his head again, beneath the random surface of his thoughts.

"Cinco dragones y un cabo,
Y un gato de sacristan."

That made no sense either; but Mexicans found something in it. Liked it. Now American songs had some sense:

"They bathed his head in vinegar
To fetch him up to time,
And now he drives a mule team on
The Denver City line."

A man could understand that. A proud stage-driver makes a mistake about a female passenger. Thinks he has got an heiress, and she turns out to peddle sarsaparilla. "So he's naturally used up," commented Genesmere. "You estimate a girl as one thing, and she—" Here the undercurrent welled up, breaking the surface. "Did she mean that? Was that her genuine reason?" In memory he took a look at his girl's face, and repeated her words when she besought him to come the longer way and hesitated over why. Was that shame at owning she believed such stuff? True, after asking him once about his religion and hearing what he said, she had never spoken of these things again. That must be a woman's way when she loved you first—to hide her notions that differed from yours, and not ruffle happy days. "Return the same road by Tucson!" He unwrapped a clean, many-crumpled handkerchief, and held Lolita's photograph for a while. Then he burst into an unhappy oath, and folded the picture up again. What if her priest did tell her? He had heard the minister tell about eternal punishment when he was a boy, and just as soon as he started thinking it over he knew it was a lie. And this quack Tinaja was worse foolishness, and had nothing to do with religion. Lolita afraid of his coming to grief in a country he had travelled hundreds, thousands of miles in! Perhaps she had never started thinking for herself yet. But she had. She was smarter than any girl of her age he had ever seen. She did not want him back so soon. That was what it was. Yet she had looked true; her voice had sounded that way. Again he dwelt upon her words and caresses; and harbouring these various thoughts, he killed still more of the long road, until, passing after a while Poso Blanco, and later Marsh's ranch-well at the forks where the Sonora road comes in, he reached Tucson a man divided against himself. Divided beyond his will into two selves—one of faith besieged, and one of besieging inimical reason—the inextricable error!

Business and pleasure were waiting in Tucson, and friends whose ways and company had not been of late for him; but he frequented them this time, tasting no pleasure, yet finding the ways and company better than his own. After the desert's changeless, unfathomed silence, in which nothing new came day or night to break the fettering spell his mind was falling under, the clink and knocking of bottles was good to hear, and he listened for more, craving any sound that might liven or distract his haunted spirit. Instead of the sun and stars, here was a roof; instead of the pitiless clear air, here was tobacco smoke; and beneath his boot-heels a wooden floor wet with spilled liquids instead of the unwatered crumbling sand. Without drinking, he moved his chair near the noisiest drinkers, and thus among the tobacco smoke sought to hide from his own looming doubt. Later the purring tinkle of guitars reminded him of that promised present, and the next morning he was the owner of the best instrument that he could buy. Leaving it with a friend to keep until he should come through again from Maricopa, he departed that way with his mules, finding in the new place the same sort of friends and business, and by night looking upon the same untasted pleasures. He went about town with some cattlemen—carousing bankrupts, who remembered their ruin in the middle of whiskey, and broke off to curse it and the times and climate, and their starved herds that none would buy at any price. Genesmere touched nothing, yet still drew his chair among these drinkers.

"Aren't you feeling good to-night, Russ?" asked one at length.

And Genesmere's eyes roused from seeing visions, and his ears became aware of the loud company. In Tucson he had been able to sit in the smoke, and compass a cheerful deceit of appearance even to himself. Choosing and buying the guitar had lent reality to his imitated peace of mind; he had been careful over its strings, selecting such as Lolita preferred, wrapt in carrying out this spiritual forgery of another Genesmere. But here they had noticed him; appearances had slipped from him. He listened to a piece of late Arizona news someone was in the middle of telling—the trial of several Mormons for robbing a paymaster near Cedar Springs. This was the fourth time he had heard the story, because it was new; but the present narrator dwelt upon the dodgings of a witness, a negress, who had seen everything and told nothing, outwitting the government, furnishing no proofs. This brought Genesmere quite back.

"No proofs!" he muttered. "No proofs!" He laughed and became alert. "She lied to them good, did she?"

They looked at him, because he had not spoken for so long; and he was told that she had certainly lied good.

"Fooled them clean through, did she? On oath! Tell about her."

The flattered narrator, who had been in court, gave all he knew, and Genesmere received each morsel of perjury gravely with a nod. He sat still when the story was done.

"Yes," he said, after a time. "Yes." And again, "Yes." Then he briefly bade the boys good-night, and went out from the lamps and whiskey into the dark.

He walked up and down alone, round the corral where his mules stood, round the stable where his bed-blankets were; and one or two carousers came by, who suggested further enjoyments to him. He went to the edge of the town and walked where passers would not meet him, turning now and then to look in the direction of Tucson, where the guitar was waiting. When he felt the change of dawn he went to the stable, and by the first early grey had his mules packed. He looked once again towards Tucson, and took the road he had promised not to take, leaving the guitar behind him altogether. His faith protested a little, but the other self invented a quibble, the mockery that he had already "come by Tucson," according to his literal word; and this device answered. It is a comfort to be divided no longer against one's self. Genesmere was at ease in his thraldom to the demon with whom he had wrestled through the dark hours. As the day brightened he wondered how he had come to fool a night away over a promise such as that. He took out the face in the handkerchief, and gave it a curious, defiant smile. She had said waiting would be long. She should have him quickly. And he was going to know about that visitor at the cabin, the steeple-hatted man he saw in his visions. So Maricopa drew behind him, small, clear-grouped in the unheated morning, and the sun found the united man and his mules moving into the desert.

By the well in the bottom of the Santa Cruz River he met with cattle and little late-born calves trying to trot. Their mothers, the foreman explained, had not milk enough for them, nor the cursed country food or water for the mothers. They could not chew cactus. These animals had been driven here to feed and fatten inexpensively, and get quick money for the owner. But, instead, half of them had died, and the men were driving the rest to new pastures—as many, that is, as could still walk. Genesmere knew, the foreman supposed, that this well was the last for more than a hundred miles? Funny to call a thing like that Santa Cruz a river! Well, it was an Arizona river; all right enough, no doubt, somewhere a thousand feet or so underground. Pity you weren't a prairie-dog that eats sand when he gets a thirst on him. Got any tobacco? Good-bye.

Think of any valleys that you know between high mountains. Such was southern Arizona once—before we came. Then fill up your valleys with sand until the mountains show no feet or shoulders, but become as men buried to the neck. That is what makes separate islands of their protruding peaks, and that is why water slinks from the surface whenever it can and flows useless underneath, entombed in the original valley. This is Arizona now—since the pterodactyls have gone. In such a place the traveller turns mariner, only, instead of the stars, he studies the water-wells, shaping his course by these. Not sea-gulls, but ravens, fly over this waste, seeking their meal. Some were in front of Genesmere now, settled black in the recent trail of the cattle. He did not much care that the last well was gone by, for he was broken in by long travel to the water of the 'dobe-holes that people rely upon through this journey. These 'dobe-holes are occasional wallows in clayey spots, and men and cattle know each one. The cattle, of course, roll in them, and they become worn into circular hollows, their edges tramped into muck, and surrounded by a thicket belt of mesquite. The water is not good, but will save life. The first one lay two stages from the well, and Genesmere accordingly made an expected dry camp the first night, carrying water from the well in the Santa Cruz, and dribbling all of it but a cupful among his animals, and the second night reached his calculated 'dobe-hole. The animals rolled luxuriously in the brown, dungy mixture, and Genesmere made his coffee strong. He had had no shade at the first camp, and here it was good under the tangle of the mesquite, and he slept sound. He was early awakened by the ravens, whose loose, dislocated croaking came from where they sat at breakfast on the other side of the wallow. They had not suspected his presence among the mesquite, and when he stepped to the mud-hole and dipped its gummy fluid in his coffee-pot they rose hoarse and hovering, and flapped twenty yards away, and sat watching until he was gone into the desert, when they clouded back again round their carrion.

This day was over ground yellow and hard with dearth, until afternoon brought a footing of sifting sand heavy to travel in. He had plenty of time for thinking. His ease after the first snapping from his promise had changed to an eagerness to come unawares and catch the man in the steeple-hat. Till that there could be no proofs. Genesmere had along the road nearly emptied his second canteen of its brown-amber drink, wetting the beasts' tongues more than his own. The neighbourhood of the next 'dobe-hole might be known by the three miles of cactus you went through before coming on it, a wide-set plantation of the yucca. The posted plants deployed over the plain in strange extended order like legions and legions of figures, each shock-head of spears bunched bristling at the top of its lank, scaly stalk, and out of that stuck the blossom-pole, a pigtail on end, with its knot of bell-flowers seeded to pods ten feet in the air. Genesmere's horse started and nearly threw him, but it was only a young calf lying for shade by a yucca. Genesmere could tell from its unlicked hide that the mother had gone to hunt water, and been away for some time. This unseasonable waif made a try at running away, but fell in a heap, and lay as man and mules passed on. Presently he passed a sentinel cow. She stood among the thorns guarding the calves of her sisters till they should return from getting their water. The desert cattle learn this shift, and the sentinel now, at the stranger's approach, lowered her head, and with a feeble but hostile sound made ready to protect her charge, keeping her face to the passing enemy. Farther along gaunt cows stood or lay under the perpetual yuccas, an animal to every plant. They stared at Genesmere passing on; some rose to look after him; some lifted their heads from the ground, and seeing, laid them down again. He came upon a calf watching its mother, who had fallen in such a position that the calf could not suck. The cow's foreleg was caught over her own head, and so she held herself from rising. The sand was rolled and grooved into a wheel by her circlings; her body heaved and fell with breathing, and the sand was wet where her pivot nostrils had ground it. While Genesmere untangled her and gave her tongue the last of his canteen the calf walked round and round. He placed the cow upon her feet, and as soon as he moved away to his horse the calf came to its mother, who began to lick it. He presently marked ahead the position of the coming 'dobe-hole by the ravens assembled in the air, continually rising and lighting. The white horse and mules quickened their step, and the trail became obliterated by hundreds of hoof-marks leading to the water. As a spider looks in the centre of an empty web, so did the round wallow sit in the middle of the plain, with threaded feet conducting from everywhere to it. Mules and white horse scraped through the scratching mesquite, and the ravens flapped up. To Genesmere their croaking seemed suddenly to fill all space with loud total clamour, for no water was left, only mud. He eased the animals of their loads and saddles, and they rolled in the stiff mud, squeezing from it a faint ooze, and getting a sort of refreshment. Genesmere chewed the mud, and felt sorry for the beasts. He turned both canteens upside down and licked the bungs. A cow had had his last drink. Well, that would keep her alive several hours more. Hardly worth while; but spilled milk decidedly. Milk! That was an idea. He caught animal after animal, and got a few sickly drops. There was no gain in camping at this spot, no water for coffee; so Genesmere moved several hundred yards away to be rid of the ravens and their all-day-long meal and the smell. He lay thinking what to do. Go back? At the rate he could push the animals now that last hole might be used up by the cattle before he got there—and then it was two stages more to the Santa Cruz well. And the man would be gaining just so many more days unhindered at the cabin. Out of the question. Forward, it was one shortish drive to the next hole. If that were dry, he could forsake the trail and make a try by a short-cut for that Tinaja place. And he must start soon, too, as soon as the animals could stand it, and travel by night and rest when the sun got bad. What business had October to be hot like this? So in the darkness he mounted again, and noon found him with eyes shut under a yucca. It was here that he held a talk with Lolita. They were married, and sitting in a room with curtains that let you see flowers growing outside by the window, as he had always intended. Lolita said to him that there was no fool like an old fool, and he was telling her that love could make a man more a fool than age, when she threw the door open, letting in bright light, and said, "No proofs." The bright light was the real sun coming round the yucca on his face, and he sat up and saw the desert. No cows were here, but he noticed the roughened hides and sunk eyes of his own beasts, and spoke to them.

"Cheer up, Jeff! Stonewall!" He stopped at the pain. It was in his lips and mouth. He put up his hand, and the feel of his tongue frightened him. He looked round to see what country he was in, and noted the signs that it was not so very far now. The blue crags of the islands were showing, and the blue sterile sky spread over them and the ceaseless sunlight like a plague. Man and horse and mules were the only life in the naked bottom of this cauldron. The mirage had caught the nearest island, and blunted and dissolved its points and frayed its base away to a transparent fringe.

"Like a lump of sugar melts in hot tod," remarked Genesmere, aloud, and remembered his thickened mouth again. "I can stand it off for a while yet, though—if they can travel." His mules looked at him when he came—looked when he tightened their cinches. "I know, Jeff," he said, and inspected the sky. "No heaven's up there. Nothing's back of that thing, unless it's hell."

He got the animals going, and the next 'dobe-hole was like the last, and busy with the black flapping of the birds. "You didn't fool me," said Genesmere, addressing the mud. "I knew you'd be dry." His eye ran over the cattle, that lay in various conditions. "That foreman was not too soon getting his live-stock out of your country," he continued to the hole, his tongue clacking as it made his words. "This live-stock here's not enjoying itself like its owners in town. This live-stock was intended for Eastern folks' dinner. But you've got ahead of 'em this trip," he said to the ravens. He laughed loudly, and, hearing himself, stopped, and his face became stern. "You don't want to talk this way, Russ Genesmere. Shut your head. You're alone. I wish I'd never known!" he suddenly cried out.

He went to his animals and sat down by them, clasping and unclasping his hands. The mules were lying down on the baked mud of the wallow with their loads on, and he loosed them. He stroked his white horse for some little while, thinking; and it was in his heart that he had brought these beasts into this scrape. It was sunset and cool. Against the divine fires of the west the peaks towered clear in splendour impassive, and forever aloof, and the universe seemed to fill with infinite sadness. "If she'll tell me it's not so," he said, "I'll believe her. I will believe her now. I'll make myself. She'll help me to." He took what rest he dared, and started up from it much later than he had intended, having had the talk with Lolita again in the room with the curtains. It was nine when he set out for the short-cut under the moon, dazed by his increasing torture. The brilliant disk, blurring to the eye, showed the mountains unearthly plain, beautiful, and tall in the night. By-and-by a mule fell and could not rise, and Genesmere decided it was as well for all to rest again. The next he knew it was blazing sunshine, and the sky at the same time bedded invisible in black clouds. And when his hand reached for a cloud that came bellying down to him, it changed into a pretzel, and salt burned in his mouth at the sight of it. He turned away and saw the hot, unshaded mountains wrinkled in the sun, glazed and shrunk, gullied like the parchment of an old man's throat; and then he saw a man in a steeple-hat. He could no more lay the spectre that wasted his mind than the thirst-demon which raged in his body. He shut his eyes, and then his arm was beating at something to keep it away. Pillowed on his saddle, he beat until he forgot. A blow at the corner of his eye brought him up sitting, and a raven jumped from his chest.

"You're not experienced," said Genesmere. "I'm not dead yet. But I'm obliged to you for being so enterprising. You've cleared my head. Quit that talk, Russ Genesmere." He went to the mule that had given out during the night. "Poor Jeff! We must lighten your pack. Now if that hunchback had died here, the birds would have done his business for him without help from any of your cats. Am I saying that, now, or only thinking it? I know I'm alone. I've travelled that way in this world. Why?" He turned his face, expecting someone to answer, and the answer came in a fierce voice: "Because you're a man, and can stand this world off by yourself. You look to no one." He suddenly took out the handkerchief and tore the photograph to scraps. "That's lightened my pack all it needs. Now for these boys, or they'll never make camp." He took what the mules carried, his merchandise, and hid it carefully between stones—for they had come near the mountain country—and, looking at the plain he was leaving, he saw a river. "Ha, ha!" he said, slyly; "you're not there, though. And I'll prove it to you." He chose another direction, and saw another flowing river. "I was expecting you," he stated, quietly. "Don't bother me. I'm thirsty."

But presently, as he journeyed, he saw lying to his right a wide, fertile place, with fruit-trees and water everywhere. "Peaches too!" he sang out, and sprang off to run, but checked himself in five steps. "I don't seem able to stop your foolish talking," he said, "but you shall not chase around like that. You'll stay with me. I tell you that's a sham. Look at it." Obedient, he looked hard at it, and the cactus and rocks thrust through the watery image of the lake like two photographs on the same plate. He shouted with strangling triumph, and continued shouting until brier-roses along a brook and a farm-house unrolled to his left, and he ran half-way there, calling his mother's name. "Why, you fool, she's dead!" He looked slowly at his cut hands, for he had fallen among stones. "Dead, back in Kentucky, ever so long ago," he murmured, softly. "Didn't stay to see you get wicked." Then he grew stern again. "You've showed yourself up, and you can't tell land from water. You're going to let the boys take you straight. I don't trust you."

He started the mules, and caught hold of his horse's tail, and they set out in single file, held steady by their instinct, stumbling ahead for the water they knew among the mountains. Mules led, and the shouting man brought up the rear, clutching the white tail like a rudder, his feet sliding along through the stones. The country grew higher and rougher, and the peaks blazed in the hot sky; slate and sand and cactus below, gaping cracks and funnelled erosions above, rocks like monuments slanting up to the top pinnacles; supreme Arizona, stark and dead in space, like an extinct planet, flooded blind with eternal brightness. The perpetual dominating peaks caught Genesmere's attention. "Toll on!" he cried to them. "Toll on, you tall mountains. What do you care? Summer and winter, night and day, I've known you, and I've heard you all along. A man can't look but he sees you walling God's country from him, ringing away with your knell."

He must have been lying down during some time, for now he saw the full moon again, and his animals near him, and a fire blazing that himself had evidently built. The coffee-pot sat on it, red-hot and split open. He felt almost no suffering at all, but stronger than ever in his life, and he heard something somewhere screaming "water! water! water!" fast and unceasing, like an alarm-clock. A rattling of stones made him turn, and there stood a few staring cattle. Instantly he sprang to his feet, and the screaming stopped. "Round 'em up, Russ Genesmere! It's getting late!" he yelled, and ran among the cattle, whirling his rope. They dodged weakly this way and that, and next he was on the white horse urging him after the cows, who ran in a circle. One struck the end of a log that stuck out from the fire, splintering the flames and embers, and Genesmere followed on the tottering horse through the sparks, swinging his rope and yelling in the full moon: "Round 'em up! round 'em up! Don't you want to make camp? All the rest of the herd's bedded down along with the ravens."

The white horse fell and threw him by the edge of a round hole, but he did not know it till he opened his eyes and it was light again, and the mountains still tolling. Then like a crash of cymbals the Tinaja beat into his recognition. He knew the slate rock; he saw the broken natural stairs. He plunged down them, arms forward like a diver's, and ground his forehead against the bottom. It was dry. His bloodshot eyes rolled once up round the sheer walls. Yes, it was the Tinaja, and his hands began to tear at the gravel. He flung himself to fresh places, fiercely grubbing with his heels, biting into the sand with his teeth; while above him in the cañon his placid animals lay round the real Tinaja Bonita, having slaked their thirst last night, in time, some thirty yards from where he now lay bleeding and fighting the dust in the dry twin hole.

He heard voices, and put his hands up to something round his head. He was now lying out in the light, with a cold bandage round his forehead, and a moist rag on his lips.

"Water!" He could just make the whisper.

But Lolita made a sign of silence.

"Water!" he gasped.

She shook her head, smiling, and moistened the rag. That must be all just now.

His eye sought and travelled, and stopped short, dilating; and Lolita screamed at his leap for the living well.

"Not yet! Not yet!" she said in terror, grappling with him. "Help! Luis!"

So this was their plot, the demon told him—to keep him from water! In a frenzy of strength he seized Lolita. "Proved! Proved!" he shouted, and struck his knife into her. She fell at once to the earth and lay calm, eyes wide open, breathing in the bright sun. He rushed to the water and plunged, swallowing and rolling.

Luis ran up from the cows he was gathering, and when he saw what was done, sank by Lolita to support her. She pointed to the pool.

"He is killing himself!" she managed to say, and her head went lower.

"And I'll help you die, caberon! I'll tear your tongue. I'll——"

But Lolita, hearing Luis's terrible words, had raised a forbidding hand. She signed to leave her and bring Genesmere to her.

The distracted Luis went down the stone stairs to kill the American in spite of her, but the man's appearance stopped him. You could not raise a hand against one come to this. The water-drinking was done, and Genesmere lay fainting, head and helpless arms on the lowest stone, body in the water. The Black Cross stood dry above. Luis heard Lolita's voice, and dragged Genesmere to the top as quickly as he could. She, seeing her lover, cried his name once and died; and Luis cast himself on the earth.

"Fool! fool!" he repeated, catching at the ground, where he lay for some while until a hand touched him. It was Genesmere.

"I'm seeing things pretty near straight now," the man said. "Come close. I can't talk well. Was—was that talk of yours, and singing—was that bluff?"

"God forgive me!" said poor Luis.

"You mean forgive me," said Genesmere. He lay looking at Lolita. "Close her eyes," he said. And Luis did so. Genesmere was plucking at his clothes, and the Mexican helped him draw out a handkerchief, which the lover unfolded like a treasure. "She used to look like this," he began. He felt and stopped. "Why, it's gone!" he said. He lay evidently seeking to remember where the picture had gone, and his eyes went to the hills whence no help came. Presently Luis heard him speaking, and, leaning to hear, made out that he was murmuring his own name, Russ, in the way Lolita had been used to say it. The boy sat speechless, and no thought stirred in his despair as he watched. The American moved over, and put his arms round Lolita, Luis knowing that he must not offer to help him do this. He remained so long that the boy, who would never be a boy again, bent over to see. But it was only another fainting-fit. Luis waited; now and then the animals moved among the rocks. The sun crossed the sky, bringing the many-coloured evening, and Arizona was no longer terrible, but once more infinitely sad. Luis started, for the American was looking at him and beckoning.

"She's not here," Genesmere said, distinctly.

Luis could not follow.

"Not here, I tell you." The lover touched his sweetheart. "This is not her. My punishment is nothing," he went on, his face growing beautiful. "See there!"

Luis looked where he pointed.

"Don't you see her? Don't you see her fixing that camp for me? We're going to camp together now."

But these were visions alien to Luis, and he stared helpless, anxious to do anything that the man might desire. Genesmere's face darkened wistfully.

"Am I not making camp?" he said.

Luis nodded to please him, without at all comprehending.

"You don't see her." Reason was warring with the departing spirit until the end. "Well, maybe you're right. I never was sure. But I'm mortal tired of travelling alone. I hope——"

That was the end, and Russ Genesmere lay still beside his sweetheart. It was a black evening at the cabin, and a black day when Luis and old Ramon raised and fenced the wooden head-stone, with its two forlorn names.

* * *

A man may do it for a duty, but he does not enjoy kissing a woman—no matter how good she is—if she knows how bad he is, and is in a position to make him feel it.

CORRA HARRIS.

Some Dogs that Keep on Living

And the Woman said: "His name is not Wild Dog any more, but the First Friend, because he will be our friend for always and always and always." RUDYARD KIPLING.

THE KING CHOOSES BETWEEN PARADISE AND HIS HOUND

But the king answered: "O thou Wisest One,
Who know'st what was and is and is to be,
Still one more grace! This hound hath ate with me,
Followed me, loved me: must I leave him now?"
"Monarch," spake Indra, "thou art now as we,
Deathless, divine: thou art become a god;
Glory and power and gifts celestial
And all the joys of heaven are thine for aye:
What hath a beast with these? Leave here thy hound!"
Yet Yudhistthira answered, "O Most High,
O Thousand-eyed and Wisest. Can it be
That one exalted should be pitiless?
Nay, let me lose such glory: for its sake
I would not leave one living thing I loved."

THE MAHABHARATTA [Sir Edwin Arnold's translation].

THE DOG THAT WAS KING OVER NORWAY

Then King Eystein made another inroad into Throndheim, and ravaged the land far and wide, and subdued it. He then offered the people either his slave . . . or his dog, whose name was Laur, to be their King. They preferred the dog, as they thought they would sooner get rid of him.

Now the dog was by witchcraft, gifted with three men's wisdom; and when he barked, he spake one word and barked two. A collar and chain of gold and silver were made for him, and his courtiers carried him on their shoulders when the weather or ways were foul A throne was erected for him, and he sat upon a high place, as kings are used to sit. . . . It is told that the occasion of his death was that the wolves one day broke into his fold, and his courtiers stirred him up to defend his cattle; but when he ran down from his mound, and attacked the wolves, they tore him into pieces. HEIMSKRINGLA.

WHEN HIS MASTER, ODYSSEUS, CAME HOME DISGUISED AS A BEGGAR

There lay the dog Argos, full of vermin. Yet even now when he was aware of Odysseus standing by, he wagged his tail and wagged both his ears, but nearer to his master he had not now the strength to draw. But Odysseus looked aside and wiped away a tear that he easily hid from Eumaeus, and straightway asked him saying:

"Eumaeus, verily this is a great marvel, this hound lying here in the dung. Truly he is goodly of growth, but I know not certainly if he have speed with his beauty, or if he be comely only, like as are men's trencher dogs that their lords keep for the pleasure of the eye."

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus: "In very truth this is the dog of a man that has died in a far land. If he were what once he was in limb and in the feats of the chase, when Odysseus left him to go to Troy, soon wouldst thou marvel at the sight of his swiftness and his strength. There was no beast that could flee from him in the deep places of the wood, when he was in pursuit; for even on a track he was the keenest hound. But now he is holden in an evil case, and his lord hath perished far from his own country, and the careless women take no charge of him". . . .

Therewith he passed within the fair-lying house, and went straight to the hall, to the company of the proud wooers.

But upon Argos came the fate of black death, even in the hour that he beheld Odysseus again, in the twentieth year. Homer.

The Roman Slave's Dog

But a more extraordinary fact than all is what took place in our own times, and is testified by the public register of the Roman people. In the consulship of Appius Junius and P. Silius, when Titus Sabinus was put to death, together with his slaves, for the affair of Nero, the son of Germanicus, it was found impossible to drive away a dog, which belonged to one of them, from the prison; nor could it be forced away from the body, which had been cast down the Gemitorian steps. But there it stood howling, in the presence of vast multitudes of people; and when someone threw a piece of bread to it, the animal carried it to the mouth of its master. Afterwards when the body was thrown into the Tiber, the dog swam into the river and endeavoured to raise it out of the water; quite a throng of people being collected to witness this instance of an animal's fidelity. Pliny.

A Philosopher's Judgment

Socrates—A dog, when he sees a stranger, is angry; when an acquaintance he welcomes him, although the one has never done him any harm, nor the other any good. . . . Surely this instinct of the dog is very charming; your dog is a true philosopher.

Glaucon—Why?

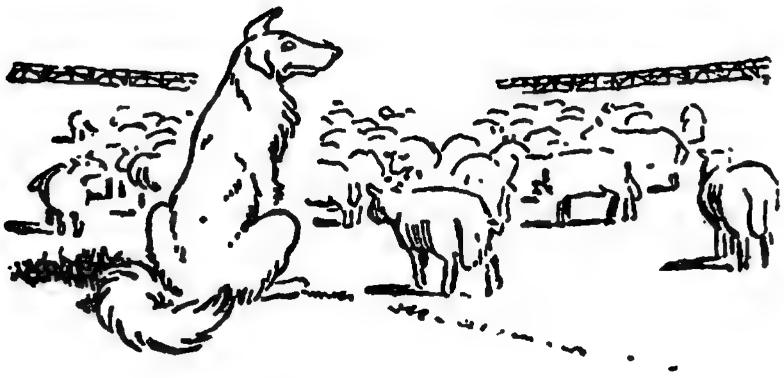
Socrates—Because he distinguishes the face of a friend and of an enemy, only by the criterion of knowing and not knowing. And must not a creature be fond of learning who determines what is friendly and what is unfriendly by the test of knowledge and ignorance? Plato.

The Dog Who Knew His Master's Cows

Once when Olaf was out on a foray it fell that it was needful that they should foray ashore for provisions, and accordingly went his men to land and drove down a number of cattle to the shore. Then came a peasant after them and prayed Olaf give him back his cows, and Olaf bade him take his cows could he find them: "But let him not delay our journey." The peasant had with him a big cattle-dog. This dog sent he into the herd of meat whereof were being driven many hundreds, and the animal hither and thither ran among the drove, singling out as many cows as the peasant said he owned, and all of them were marked in the same manner. Now knowing that the dog had chosen rightly it seemed to them that this was passing clever, and so Olaf asked the peasant whether he would give him the dog. "Willingly," answered he, and Olaf in exchange therefor gave him a gold ring, and the promise of his friendship. That dog was named Vigi, and it was the best of all dogs; Olaf had pleasure in him for a long time thereafter. Saga of Olaf Trygvason.

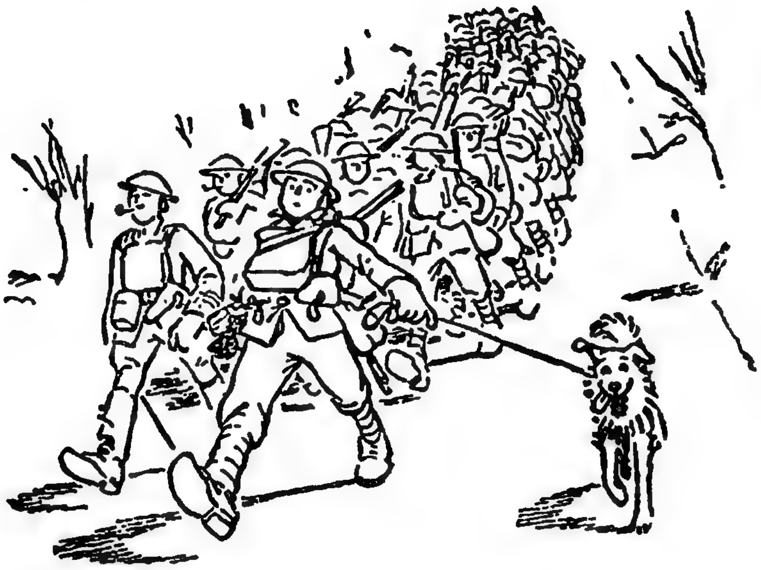
The Results of Discipline

By FOUGASSE



I

Jock the Sheep-dog—



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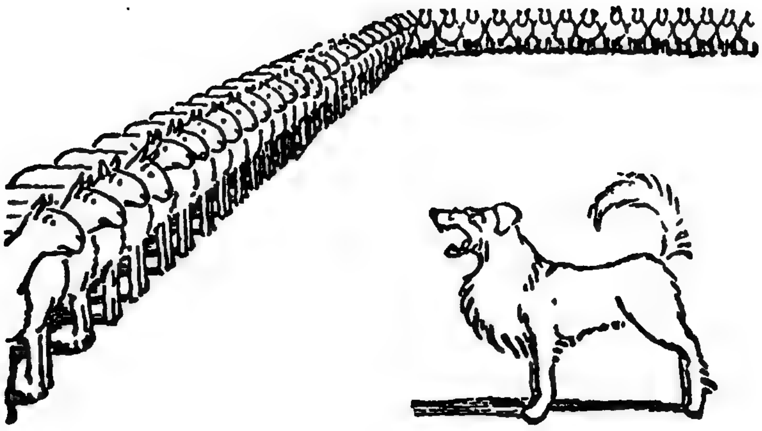
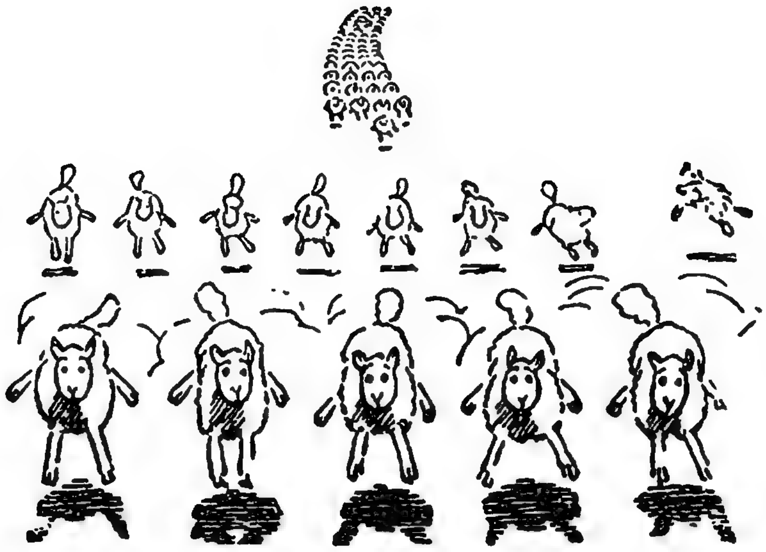
Was a Battalion Mascot during the war



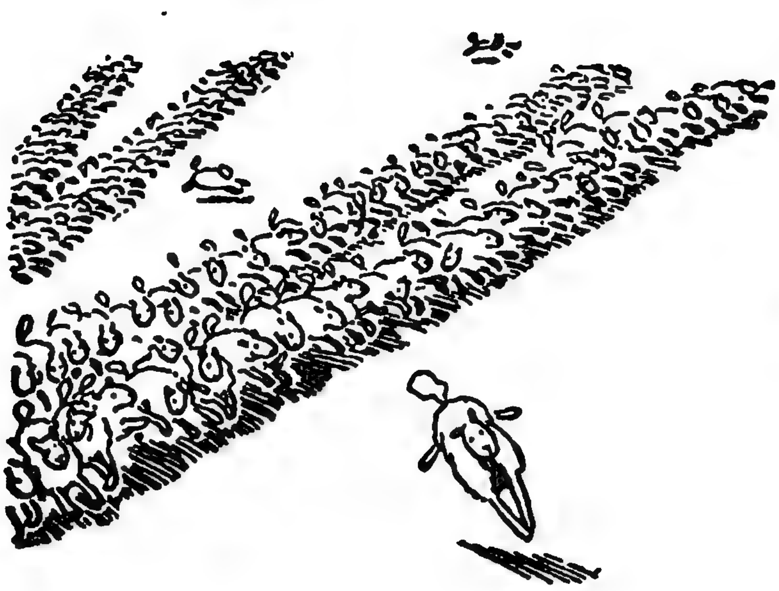
III

Now he—



IV

is back—



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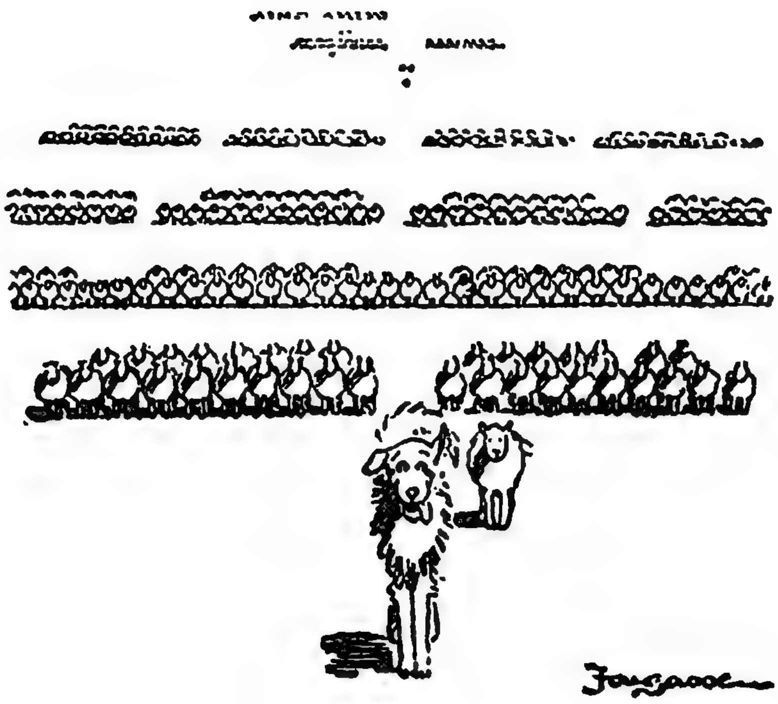


VI

With the Sheep Again

THEY HAD THEM, EVEN IN THOSE DAYS

THE PRIORESS

She was so charitable and so pitous,
She wolde wepe if that she saw a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were ded or bledde.
Of smale houndes hadde she, that she fedde
With rosted flesh, and milk, and wastel brede.
But sore wept she if one of hem were dede,
Or if men smote it with a yerde smert:
And all was conscience and tendre herte. CHAUCER

⁂

THE GREYHOUND WHO FOUGHT FOR OWEN

Cadwalladon, through inveterate malice, slew his brother Owen; a greyhound belonging to the aforesaid Owen, large, beautiful, and curiously spotted with a variety of colours, received seven wounds from arrows and lances in the defence of his master, and on his part did much injury to the enemy and assassins. When his wounds were healed, he was sent to King Henry II by William, Earl of Gloucester, in testimony of so great and extraordinary a deed. A dog, of all animals, is most attached to man, and most easily distinguishes him; sometimes, when deprived of his master, he refuses to live, and in his master's defence is bold enough to brave death; ready therefore to die, either with or for his master.

GIRALDUS DE BARRI (about 1200 A. D.).

⁂

CRAB

LAUNCE—"I think Crab, my dog, is the sourest natured dog that lives: my mother weeping, my father wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, our cat wringing her hands, and all our house in a great perplexity, yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear. He is a stone, a very pebble-stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog."

SHAKESPEARE.

⁂

THE DOG OF MONTARGIS

[This famous greyhound, Dragon, was called "the dog of Montargis" because his accusing attack on Macaire was pictured over the chimney of the great hall in the castle of Montargis. The story was also dramatized by Guilbert de Pixérécourt in 1814].

To affirm the nobleness of hounds I shall tell a tale of a greyhound, that of Aubrey of Montdidier, the which men may see painted in the realm of France in many places.

That Aubrey was a squire of the King's house of France, and upon a day he was going from the Court to his own house, and as he passed by the woods of Bondy . . . and led with him a fair greyhound that he had nourished up, a man that hated him for great envy without any other reason and was called Macaire, ran upon him within the wood and slew him without warning. . . .

And when the greyhound sought his master and found him dead, he covered him with earth and leaves with his paws and his muzzle as best he could; and when he had been for three days and might no longer bide for hunger, he turned again to the King's Court, and there he found Macaire which was a great gentleman and had slain his master. And also as soon as the greyhound had seen Macaire, he ran upon him and should have maimed him, if men had let him. The King of France, the which was wise and perceiving, asked what it was; and men told him all the story. The greyhound took from the tables what he might, and brought it to his master and put meat in his mouth, and this same the greyhound did every three days; and then the King made men follow the greyhound to see whither he bore the meat he took in the Court. And then they found him dead and buried the said Aubrey, and the King made come many men of his Court, and made him stroke the greyhound and him cherish, and made his men lead him by the collar along by the house, but he strayed never.

And then the King commanded Macaire to take a gobbet of flesh and give it to the greyhound; and as soon as the greyhound saw Macaire he left the flesh and would have run upon him. And when the King saw that, he held great suspicion upon Macaire; he said to Macaire, "You must fight against the greyhound"; and then he began to look dull . . . . The which Macaire had a great two-handed staff . . . yet was discomfitted. And the King commanded that the greyhound, the which had Macaire under him, should be taken up, and then made enquiry of the truth at Macaire, the which acknowledged he had slain Aubrey by treason, and therefore he was hanged and drawn. EDMUND DE LANGLEY.

⁂

WHEN ALL FAILED TO RECOGNIZE SIR TRISTRAM

Then the Queen had always a little brachet with her, that Sir Tristram gave her the first time that ever she came into Cornwall, and never would the brachet depart from her, but if Sir Tristram was nigh there as was La Beale Isoud; and this brachet was sent from the King's daughter of France unto Sir Tristram, for great love. And anon as this little brachet felt a savour of Sir Tristram, she leaped upon him, and licked his cheeks and his ears, and then she whined and quested, and she smelled at his feet and at his hands, and on all parts of his body that she might come to. "Ah! my lady," said Dame Bragwaine unto La Beale Isoud, "alas! alas!" said she, "I see it is mine own lord, Sir Tristram." And thereupon Isoud fell down in a swoon and so lay a great while; and when she might speak she said, "My lord, Sir Tristram, blessed be God ye have your life; and now I am sure ye shall be discovered by this little brachet, for she will never leave you. . . ."

SIR THOMAS MALORY.

⁂

CRAB AND HIS MASTER

LAUNCE—"I . . . . goes me to the fellow that whips the dogs: 'Friend,' quoth I, 'you mean to whip the dog?' 'Ay, marry, do I,' quoth he. 'You do him the more wrong,' quoth I; ''twas I did the thing you wot of.' He makes me no more ado, but whips me out of the chamber. How many masters would do this for his servant? Nay, I'll be sworn, I have sat in the stocks for puddings he hath stolen, otherwise he had been executed; I have stood on the pillory for geese he hath killed, otherwise he had suffer'd for't. (*To the dog*) Thou thinkest not of this now." SHAKESPEARE.

⁂

THE DOG WHO FOUNDED A DANISH ORDER

A modern instance of gratitude to a dog is, that the chief order of Denmark (now injuriously called the Order of the Elephant) was instituted in memory of the fidelity of a dog named Wild-brat, to one of their kings who had been deserted by his subjects; he gave his order this motto, or to this effect. . . . *Wild-brat was faithful.* ALEXANDER POPE.

⁂

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S "MAIDA"

Maida deported himself with a gravity becoming his age and size, and seemed to consider himself called upon to preserve a great degree of dignity and decorum in our society. As he jogged along at a little distance ahead of us, the young dogs would gambol about him, leap on his neck, worry at his ears and endeavour to tease him into a gambol. The old dog would keep on for a long time with imperturbable solemnity, now and then seeming to rebuke the wantonness of his young companions. At length he would make a sudden turn, seize one of them and tumble him in the dust, then, giving a glance at us, as much as to say, "You see, gentlemen, I can't help giving way to this nonsense," would resume his gravity and jog on as before. Scott amused himself with these peculiarities. "I make no doubt," said he, "when Maida is alone with these young dogs, he throws gravity aside, and plays the boy as much as any of them; but he is ashamed to do so in our company and seems to say: 'Ha' done with your nonsense, youngsters; what will the laird and that other gentleman think of me if I give way to such foolery?'"

WASHINGTON IRVING.

EPITAPH FOR HIS NEWFOUNDLAND "BOATSWAIN"

Ye! who perchance behold this simple urn,
Pass on—it honours none you wish to mourn:
To mark a friend's remains these stones arise;
I never knew but one—and here he lies. LORD BYRON.

⁂

BILL SIKES'S DOG

"Come in, you sneaking warmint: wot are you stopping outside for, as if you was ashamed of your master? Come in, d'ye hear?"

A white shaggy dog, with his face scratched and torn in twenty different places, skulked into the room.

"Why didn't you come in afore?" said the man. "You're getting too proud to own me afore company, are you? Lie down!"

This command was accompanied with a kick which sent the animal to the other end of the room. He appeared well used to it, however, for he coiled himself up in a corner very quietly without uttering a sound, and winking his very ill-looking eyes twenty times in a minute, appeared to occupy himself in taking a survey of the apartment. DICKENS.

⁂

A CANINE VIRTUE

"Hev' a dog, miss. They're better friends nor any Christian. Lor'! it's a fine thing to have a dumb brute fond on you; it'll stick to you, and make no jaw." GEORGE ELIOT.

⁂

THE MEDITATIONS OF RIQUET

To eat is good. To have eaten is better. For the enemy who lieth in wait to take your food is quick and crafty.

Men possess the divine power of opening all doors. I by myself am only able to open a few. Doors are great fetishes which do not readily obey dogs.

Men, beasts, and stones grow great as they come near, and loom enormous when they are upon me. I remain equally great wherever I am.

My master keeps me warm when I lie behind him in his chair. It is because he is a god. In front of the fire-place is a hot stone. That stone is divine.

I speak when I please. From my master's mouth proceed likewise sounds which make sense. But his meaning is not so clear as that expressed by the sounds of my voice. Every sound that I utter has a meaning. From my master's lips come forth many idle noises. It is difficult but necessary to divine the thoughts of the master.

It is impossible to know whether one has acted well towards men. One must worship them without seeking to understand them. Their wisdom is mysterious.

I am the centre of all things: men, beasts, and things, friendly and adverse, are ranged about me.

All is flux and reflux. I alone remain. ANATOLE FRANCE.

⁂

HOW BALTO BROUGHT THE SERUM TO NOME

(In February, 1925, the supply of serum failed during a severe diphtheria epidemic in Nome, Alaska. The story of the dash through a blizzard with dog sledges to carry a fresh supply culminated in the performance of Balto, the lead dog of the team covering the final stretch—or rather two stretches, for the last twenty-one miles from Safety was to have been made by a relay team. Gunnar Kasson, who drove the sledge, told his story in the New York World. In March a movement was active to erect a statue in New York City to Balto.)

Well, it was a pretty tough trip, all right. The fact is, it was the toughest I've ever had on the trails, and I've been mushing Alaska since 1904. But Balto, he's my lead dog, brought us through.

He sniffed the trail in the light snow when I couldn't tell where we were, on the trail or off. He kept the direction on the bare ice—the wind had swept it slick as glass—and the wind was coming in so I couldn't see the wheel dog nearest the sled. Balto is a good dog.

(Balto is well known in the Alaskan country. He led Kasson's dogs in 1915 when they won the Moose race. Two years ago he led the dogs which carried Roald Amundsen north from Nome when the explorer planned an airplane flight over the North Pole. Balto has gained the name of being the best lead dog in Alaska.)

I got into Bluff Sunday morning, sixteen hours before Charlie Olson did. I had thirteen dogs, long-haired Mallamutes. They're half wolf. Charlie got in at eight o'clock at night. He was glad to see me. He had run his seven huskies twenty-five miles from Golofnin. His dogs have shorter hair. Every one was frozen in the groin. They came in stiff and sore. They couldn't have gone much farther. . . .

I took the serum from Charlie. . . . It was blowing so hard and was so cold that we took the stuff into a cabin to get it warmed up and to see if the wind would go down.

But it kept getting colder. It went down to 28 below. The wind was fierce; I don't know how fast, but I've never felt it faster. There wasn't any use in waiting, so on we went. It was then ten o'clock Sunday night. We'd waited in the cabin two hours.

The snow was coming down fast. I hitched the dogs. I wanted to get on to the road house at Safety (a distance of thirty-four miles) before the trails got impassable. The first piece of trail was the best. I stuck to the coast, figuring it would make good going if not too stormy. The wind was blowing hard. I don't know just how hard. But I had seal mukluks on my feet. They go up to the hips. And I had sealskin pants over them. On my head I had reindeer parka and hood and a drill parka over that. But the wind was so strong that it went right through the skins.

Crossing Topkok River I ran into trouble. I ran Balto into an overflow. I couldn't see it ahead, as it was snowing so. I had to turn him into a soft snowdrift to dry off his feet. That keeps them from freezing and getting torn on the glare ice.

I stopped only a few minutes, then started up Topkok Hill. The wind was coming in from the northwest. Topkok Hill is hell when it's storming. It was storming some when I got up there. My right cheek got frozen.

Coming down from Topkok Hill you come to the flat for a stretch of six miles. Along a ways is Spruce Creek. It's always the worst spot for wind in any kind of weather. The wind was coming across the lagoons and sloughs there, picking up the snow like it was a comb. It was blowing snow so hard I could hardly see my hand in front of my face. I couldn't even see the wheel dog.

That's where Balto came in. I didn't know where I was. I couldn't even guess. He scented the trail through the snow and kept going straight on the glary ice of the frozen lagoons. I didn't even know when I passed right by Solomon, so I didn't get the message from Nome.

It's twelve and a half miles from Solomon to Safety. The wind across Bonanza Creek was the worst I ever felt. The sled spilled every other minute in the soft snow, and I had to untangle the dogs' harness, lift the stuff back on the sled and get going again. It was dark, too—black.

The going was better after I got across Bonanza. The trail turned so the wind was with me. That boosted me along so I made the twelve and a half miles to Safety in eighty minutes.

The wind had gone down when I got to Safety. I mushed by the roadhouse, but as everything was dark and Balto and the others were going good now, I decided to continue instead of waking Ed Rohn.

It's twenty-one miles from Safety to Nome. The trail runs along the beach of the Bering Sea. The wind had drifted the snow between the hummocks and the upper beach. It made the trail heavy and slow, but with the wind gone down I could see the trail ahead sometimes, as it wasn't so dark any more.

Two of my dogs who were frozen on another trip began to stiffen up. I made a rabbit skin covering for them, but the cold went right through it.

I was good and glad to see Nome. I was good and hungry.

The Pot of Frightful Doom

By CHESTER BAILEY FERNALD

C. B. Fernald

THE blithesome air of "Tsim-tsam-chong" was issuing forth from the little chamber in Beverly Place when a sudden tempestuous rattling came at the door, and Dr. Wing Shee stilled his mandolin.

"They are going to finish my brother Chow!" wept the youth Sum Ah. "The head of the Sing Song Tong just gave me a scroll—and a kick-push too—and it says they have put Chow in chains in a dungeon, with nothing but foreign devils' bread! And the man who tries to rescue him they swear to roll in the cask-with-red-hot-spikes; and oh, most wonderful, ancient, wise physician, won't you try?"

Among the screens and china at Sum Chow's curio shop the doctor found none but the helper Yang. Chow was gone. Sum Fay, the diminutive wife of Sum Chow, heard, and put down her tiny girl Sum Oo, and came out with a sinking heart beneath her silken tunic. The doctor told her that Chow was his friend, and spoke of the duty Confucius demanded of friendship, and said that Sum Chow was surely beloved of the gods and so could not die young. Then he left her mute and blank. But he knew how fiercely the Sing Song Tong had scowled at Chow for years, because of Chow's buoyant career and because he would not join them. They were a treacherous secret society, driving women slaves, and seeking the despotism of Chinatown. A day ago their hatchetmen had eased a grudge against a poor old maker of pipe-bowl holes, and had clapped a plaster over his mouth, and beaten his back with his own bamboo, till his face was the color of clay, before Sum Chow had broken one of their heads and driven them away from their aged victim. Chow's present plight was the Sing Song Tong's reply; and now the doctor read the omen of three spots which he had shown Sum Chow the night before—spots which had been nine days on the doctor's thumbnail. As the little old wise man pushed along the crowded streets, he strove to connect with all this the recent strange recurrence of the uninterpretable number one and a half, which had lately appeared in all his occult findings.

Sum Fay had gone with a shudder to the dusty shrine, and had lighted redolent joss-sticks, and burned soul-money for Chow's spiritual costs, in case they had killed him. She had been a mission Christian girl, and had learned but little of the Taoist faith; for all of Chow's religion was integrity and the love of family. But now, in her first disaster, her native promptings conquered; and she prayed to her tinseled gods with her baby in her arms. The tiny Sum Oo cooed and smilingly clutched at her mother's chin. But a salt tear suddenly dropped from Sum Fay's cheek into the baby girl's bright eye, and gave her a fright, and made her weep bitterly with her mother.

The doctor believed that if Sum Chow survived, he was stalled in the Ok Hut private hospital, which stood on a narrow street with evil history, called Hatchet Run. The rascal Ok Hut was one of the Sing Song Tong, and he had in his building a secret cell which was entered through a trap in the garret above the sick wards, and aired through a single opening made by omitting a brick from the very deep wall. To try an approach to this cell by way of Ok Hut's garret would be futile, but Dr. Wing Shee knew how to use the hole in the wall. When, at evening, the learned doctor arrived at Hatchet Run, his sleeves concealed many appropriate articles appertaining to his plan. The doctor mounted to the room of his great fat friend Pow Len, who dealt in tooth-picks made from the whiskers of sea-lions, and whose heart the doctor trusted more than his tongue.

"Ah!" said Pow Len. "It is he whose skill once saved me from death of a twisted gullet. Can I serve him?"

"It was not a twisted gullet," corrected the doctor, assuming a heavy professional air. "Your complaint was really contempt-of-the-spleen. My noble tooth-pick friend, I wish to borrow your excellent coffin; not for a funeral ceremony, but to sit in it here and meditate. For my brain is heavy with invention."

"Nothing new, I hope?" said the orthodox Pow Len, surveying the handsome casket which admiring compatriots had given him. It stood as high as an old-time eight-day clock.

"Consider a friend with confidence," quoted the doctor. "My invention is classic, now remaining but of fragmentary record, but first conceived ten centuries and three little years ago by the superhuman Tut Tut, to whom the thought shot down in a two-coloured lightning stroke. It is the sky-flying machine."

"Ah!" exclaimed the vast Pow Len. "With that I could sail like a swallow to the Golden Gate, and beard the drowsy seals by night. Enormous profits—the life of a bird—dear me!"

"Precisely," said the doctor, "the life of the airy dodo. Now, in my experience, sir, nothing has proved so stimulating to precision of thought as sedentary solitude spent continuously in commodious coffins. Therefore I request your honourable death-chest."

Thus, after Pow Len, who listened with hanging lip, had reverently poured tea for the wonderful wise man, and, dreaming of innumerable toothpicks for the plucking, had agreed, under promise of secrecy, to exchange quarters with him until either the flying-machine was produced or suitable coffin rent forthcoming, Pow Len withdrew.

The doctor quickly locked the door, and then, with his wonted deftness, fitted the coffin-lid with hinges and a hook. In a little while he had screwed the box upright against the wall, and had blown out the light and fastened himself in what had been built for a silent man. The coffin was facing in the direction of the hospital. He emptied his sleeves, and hung a tiny peanut-oil lamp above his head, and by its glimmer began to drive an auger through the back of the coffin and through the unfinished sheathing of the house to the open air.

"Sum Chow would be such a loss," thought the doctor, as he worked in bare yellow arms, with his cue coiled around his neck, "that I cannot think the omens meant it. What pleasant hours we have passed learning the 'Melican tongue! Chow should have been a scholar; for the grace with which he handles, even in 'Melican script, such words as 'cat' and 'dok' and 'pik' and 'cow,' and a hundred others I forget, is marvellous. I do not think I could ever remember the complicated marks for 'man' and 'woo-man,' or 'poy' and 'kull' long enough to come from Sum Chow's and write them correctly in my room in Beverly Place, unless I sacrificed my dignity and ran. All this 'Melican writing looks alike."

An electric light high above a neighbouring street shone on the hospital. Through the two auger-holes he could see the cell port left by the missing brick in the wall across the street. Now in one of the holes he fitted a bamboo tube, through which he intended to blow a message by way of the port to whomsoever should languish in the cell; and he hoped to reach Sum Chow. There were hours to pass before the street would be vacant, and Wing Shee had allotted the time to the composition of a message in verse, which to all but Chow would be gibberish. The doctor's only essay with a pen had left him content to express the English sounds as best he could with brush and Chinese characters. That was difficult when he met distinctions foreign to the older tongue; yet Chow could almost always decipher the doctor's scrolls. As when, in the beginning, Dr. Wing had written the Chinese signs for the sounds: "Wun pik kee foo lee too mut chee taw kee in hee sat: say iss no pik kee Chaw shee!" and Chow had readily translated these into "business" English as: "One piggee foolee too muchee talkee in his hat: say is no piggee jossee!" and recognized in this a phrase which had escaped from the mission night-school copy-book, and which, by disaster to the word "heart," had been changed from "The fool hath said in his heart" to "A big fool talked too much in his hat."

So the doctor made himself warm with the ardour of rhyming. Thus, while not many blocks away the little wife Sum Fay lay awake with the tiny Sum Oo asleep on her breast, and while the mother's melting eyes kept forming images of her husband in the dark, and she sighed and sobbed between hope and wretched fear, the doctor had even forgotten that he was sitting in a coffin, with the hour well past midnight, and the evidence of fiddle and pipe and maudlin festivity lessening in that neighbourhood, and perhaps Sum Chow in extreme torture either in the hospital or in some place unknown. And when at length Sum Fay had fallen asleep with exhaustion, and the tiny Sum Oo heaved on the mother's breast like a voyager on a miniature sea, three long hours had passed, and the learned Dr. Wing Shee had finished the following English poem:

How mun nee mah kee wah sun mai tum?
How mun nee tay 'ko ah lee mah kee cum?
You mak hop pee tem; yaw fah mee lee
Ah too mut chee wai tai; no kun shee!
You no me?

"And to think," sighed the doctor, "that, instead of staying by literature, I stampeded off to the wars! Instead of a leg-mender I might have been a laureate. 'Ah too mut chee wai tai; no kun shee!' Ah, Lao-Tse, but there's inspiration in this box!"

He softly unlocked the lid, and came out to scan the street through Pow's dilapidated blinds. For the moment there was no one in sight. Quickly he shut himself in again. A match was ready with its end embedded in putty so that the phosphorous was barely exposed. The putty fitted the bamboo tube, and when he sent this missile flying across the narrow street, propelled from the tube by an explosion of his breath, it disappeared within the hospital, through the port, without a sound. The flying-machine was completed.

Sum Chow was in the hospital. He had been lured there by one to whom once he had given alms. The wretch had watched in the crowded thoroughfare for a man of distinguished dignity, wearing a rich blue tunic with bright gilt button-balls, and light blue silken trousers wrapped at the ankles. Sum Chow liked snowy linen stockings and shoes embroidered in silver; his long cue shone with careful braiding, and his head and face were always shaved close in Chinese elegance. He hardly betrayed the power of attack which had made his envied success. That day he had gone to Hatchet Run to pay for a golden love-bangle for littlest Oo. The appointed traitor had begged a hearing in the hospital entry, and there six brutal Sing Song hatchet-men had soon prevailed over Chow's single strength. He had battered two of them, but the others had thrust him into a big jute bag, and when they carried him wriggling through the wards and up the garret ladder, the patients thought it merely a crazy opium-fiend. The hatchet-men had emptied the bag through the trap to the brick floor, and Chow had been stunned, and had wakened to find himself cold and stiff in semi-darkness, at first he knew not where. He had put his mouth to the hole in the wall and called for help in all the languages he knew, but no one had heard him. He had lain aching for hours afterward, during which Ok Hut's menial had lowered a bowl of water and some American bread. These he had avoided with fear; and so hunger sharpened, and he sternly set his face to the fate which he felt was preparing. He wondered if his shade could protect his little wife and his littlest Oo, or if death was even harsh in that. Midnight found him cramped and bowed. The strange thing which suddenly struck the inner wall, and fell a-flame at his side. was startling even to Chow.

It smoldered and died. In a moment another missile, with more wood exposed to the flame, struck and ignited. He seized it, and it burned brightly long enough for him to notice that immediately following it a waxen taper, tipped with its balancing putty ball, had shot through the air port, long, white, and unmistakable. He lighted it, and the cell port appeared from without to be faintly illumined. When his eyes had changed to meet the light, the wondering Chow picked up a scroll, and instantly recognized the brushwork of the doctor. He read:

How many markee was on my thumb?
How many days 'go allee markee come?
You make happy time; your family
Are too muchee wet-eyed: no can see!
You know me?

He bounded into life, and waved the taper past the port three times for the spots the doctor had shown him the night before, and then, after a pause, nine times for the days they had stayed on the thumb nail. So that Chow, drawing on a thread that flew in attached to a pebble, was not surprised to find one end of a Chinese telephone, and then to hear the voice of his friend:

"Worship the gods for this preservation, hearty brother," it whispered. "Your little Fay and little Oo and the stripling all fare well, though wet-eyed that you stay away; and be felicitated on their mighty love. Now first I will shoot you a dinner of dried ducks' hearts in tiny gelatin capsules —those capsules which the 'Melicans use to hide the taste of their grimacing drug *kwain-nai-in*, but which were long conceived before the year of their principal joss by one Muk Ah Muk, who confined in them the bubblesome spirits he extracted from his ten meek wives."

So that as he fell asleep, bodily contented and hopeful for the morrow, Sum Chow murmured for the tenth time:

"With the gods I never associated; but of mortals surely the greatest is Dr. Wing Shee!"

THE letter which reached the saddened curio shop told in the doctor's Chinese-written English that the big yellow tea-pot was not smashed, but endured in eternal tenderness for its little cup and its littlest saucer and the young spoon. Sum Ah (the young spoon) translated this for joyous Sum Fay (the little cup), and she danced Sum Oo (the littlest saucer) on her knee, who laughed and gurgled and behaved not like a demure Cantonese, but like any sprite amused by its own half helplessness. The light seemed now to warm the strange and beautiful wares to brighter tones, and Sum Fay set gaily to dust them before a customer from the foreign devils' world should send her scuttling in her slippers back to the penetralia; and when the helper Yang took up his books in an easier mood, and rattled the buttons on the abacus, Sum Ah sang a mission hymn of hallelujah. The better feeling lasted well into the day; but though in the afternoon Sum Fay walked abroad behind Sum Ah, and bravely smiled and chatted with him that none might suspect her woe, twilight fell with deeper melancholy. Dr. Wing had given no hope for the future. If the beloved had been free, he would have run to find his wife and his funny baby.

IN the small hours of another weary night Sum Chow sat on the damp cell floor despairing again. In the morning Ok Hut had come to the trap and beamed down, wearing the rings the hatchet-men had wrested from Chow. Ok Hut had observed with an affectation of scientific glee the signs of the first day's suffering and then had departed. The hours had dragged without incident, and darkness had come, and then midnight, with ominous sounds from the pauper ward, and two o'clock, with its anxious expectancy; and then the appointed time had passed with no token from Dr. Wing. The picture kept growing in Chow's mind of the doctor, dead and cold in Pow Len's coffin at the hands of the Sing Song Tong, and then of a cortège, with little Fay mourning the friend of her widowhood. By now he had hoped to be free. The plan had been to cut a hole in the trap, which would serve when he jumped and reached through to slide the bolt. But the sawing of wood in the stillness of night must be slow and exceedingly careful; and now it was late for beginning, and he had yet no tools.

Across the way the learned doctor, with the peanut-oil lamp like an aureole above his head, was standing motionless in the dim mahogany casket, frowning at sounds from the hospital. The doctor's trusted omens, whether he consulted the spots on his neighbour's cloth, or the bundle of crooked sticks in the pewter mug, or which way a bug ran under the burning-glass, had haunted him still with the uncanny number one and a half. He waited, alert for good or evil containing that element. The moans in the pauper ward were holding him back. They rose from a wretch in the sinking stage of the opium-habit, one of those whom the sick-pay tongs sent thither to save the drain on their treasuries. Ok Hut was accustomed to give these victims a draught which promised relief to their agonies, and then, in the most exquisite dream of their lives, they floated out of the world with never a murmur at fate, and the societies gained, and Ok Hut prospered, and the coroner was amused. Sometimes were heard for a moment those screams that went with the final plight of the smoke fiends, when, as frequently happened, they suddenly lost their minds and ran amuck; but then Ok Hut, if they refused the fatal dose, would shut them in the secret cell, stuffing the air port with rags. The doctor feared that such might happen to-night in the midst of Chow's endeavour.

But the groans subsided, and the lights from the hospital windows lessened, and Hatchet Run was left in silence. Sum Chow heaved a mighty sigh as the telephone pebble flew in; and now he pulled on the endless rope-yarn rigged across the street by the doctor, and brought in the tools through the air-port. Also the doctor sent a small round object in many thicknesses of wadding.

"Handle it like a new-born babe," he had whispered; "for in it are crowded winds of whirling waterspouts, and thunder of falling mountains, and flashes of furious flame. 'Tis a pot of frightful doom, tuned to the omens with one and a half frog's thumbs."

Then Sum Chow poised on the empty water-bowl, and started the auger into the trap. But suddenly he paused.

There had come a wild shriek from the pauper ward, with commotion and the smashing of a chair and the calls of the terrified sick. Ok Hut had been deceived. The opium fiend had not been done for; he had risen up and fallen on Ok Hut in his sleep, throttling him, and screaming that the room was hot with fiery demons.

"Ah!" muttered the doctor, in alarm. "The noise will scurry them all from their beds. Ah!"

Sum Chow withdrew the auger, and listened. They were dragging the madman up the ladder; they were going to throw him also into the cell. The ladder broke, and three men fell to the floor with a crash. That meant a delay, thought Chow. He sunk the auger into a beam close by the trap, and worked until it was twisted firmly several inches into the wood. Now it was stout enough to hold him when he hung to it by one arm—near enough to the trap to clutch the ankle of whomsoever should come to open it.

Ok Hut's menial, a man from the northern province of Chang Tung, great in stature, but no match in quickness for a well-built Cantonese, was treading along the garret. Sum Chow sprang up and clung to the auger, and the door was raised in the dark.

"You are free," came the menial's voice, speaking falsely, as Chow well knew. "I will tie this cord, and you can climb up on it."

This was a ruse. Ok Hut feared that the squad might have heard the cries, and might be closing in from the outside, suspicious of something irregular. They had done this once before, and then they had found simply a wretch beating out his brains against the hospital floor. But to-night they might have been warned and might be looking for Chow, though an appeal to the police on behalf of any Chinaman is improbable; and they might, when all expectation should subside, swoop suddenly down as they had before. It was better to get Chow out and lock him in a chest in the garret, though at the risk of stifling him. Then the madman could be thrown into the cell, where if the squad came before his strength had been writhed away they would find at the worst but a poor victim whose condition, brought on by himself, would not excite the anger of the law. The menial's invitation to Chow was a ruse which meant that when Chow's head was within reach a noose would be slipped over it, choking him, so that he would mutely follow the menial, for whatever temporary disposition might be made of him during the time.

The menial waited for an answer, but the place was black and silent. He spoke again, but his voice was returned by the walls of the cell. Then he went on his knees and struck a match, and thrust it down to be away from its sulphurous fumes. The match sputtered its first blue flame, and at the same moment the menial's wrist was caught by two hands, and the full weight of Sum Chow came on the menial's arm with such sudden force that he fell forward, hitting his head on the trap-way, and then tumbled through to the floor of the cell, where he lay stunned.

In the house on the other side of the street the doctor was breathlessly on tiptoe, with the telephone at his ear. The telephone line hung lax, and the hospital was grimly still.

"Go into the street, O bravest friend!" at length came a trembling voice in the doctor's ear. "Haul and hold fast on the cord. It hangs out from the hole in the wall. That one of us who lives shall avenge my little Fay, O friend! my littlest Oo! Haul and hold fast!"

"I hear," came the quiet answer. "Friends to live with—enemies to die with. Haul and hold fast!"

The doctor let himself noiselessly out of the coffin. It was dangerous to descend by the stairs. In a moment he dropped from the window, three times his length, to the pavement. At first he lay as if disabled, but he soon staggered up, and found the cord that issued from the cell port. The other end Sum Chow had tied around the menial's head and through his mouth to keep him silent, and Chow had made the man rise and had forced him against the cell port, where the doctor, now hauling and holding fast on the cord from the street below, held him powerless to move or speak. A long time seemed to pass while the doctor leaned back with the cord wrapped around his wrist. To him the hospital appeared to have regained its slumbers, and he pictured Sum Chow creeping stealthily along the garret toward the ladder-way. On the Run the swaying shop-signs squeaked in the gusty wind that was bringing the dawn. The doctor heard the steps of one of the squad on the intersecting street, and described the arc of a circle that brought him around the corner, still taut on the cord, but safe from observation. The policeman went by, and one approached from another way, and the doctor swung back into Hatchet Run.

Sum Chow had climbed out of the cell. At a distance he saw the faint light from the ladder-way, but heard nothing. In a few moments he walked toward it, knowing that the tread would be taken for that of the menial. At the ladder he peered cautiously over. The room was one apart from the sick wards, and no one was in it. The maniac seemed to have been quieted, and doubtless lay in his bunk. The prisoner hung by one hand, and dropped to the floor of the hospital; at the same instant Ok Hut appeared at the door from the pauper ward, and stopped, transfixed with astonishment. For a moment the two men stood staring into each other's eyes.

"This is life or death to you," said Chow, in a low tone. "Throw up your hands and turn your face to the wall."

But Ok Hut did not obey. He kept his eyes on Chow, debating. Ok had no weapon but there was one in the drawer of the table where the feeble lamp stood burning. Sum Chow also seemed unarmed, except for a small object which he grasped. Ok Hut waited, planning how to shorten the space between himself and the table, so as to make a dash and get it sooner than Chow could reach him. There was silence but for the snoring of those who slept in the pauper ward. Ok Hut seemed motionless; but he was changing his weight from one foot to another, so that each time he was approaching a fraction of an inch nearer the weapon that lay in the drawer.

Over in the other building some one was looking in perplexity from the window at the spectacle of the learned Dr. Wing Shee holding tight on a cord from the cell port. It might be friend or foe. The doctor jammed his slouch hat over his eyes, and felt for the revolver that was strapped to his forearm under his large sleeve. Soon the enemy would be down and out and at him, and there would be pistol shots and the hurry of the squad in the night.

In the hospital the two men were gazing intensely into each other's eyes. Ok Hut was beginning to move by greater units, and his confidence began to return.

"Stop!" said Chow, putting out his hand. "If you pass that crack in the board!—"

But Ok Hut made a leap for the table. In a twinkling Chow, with all his might, hurled the pot of doom.

A terrific explosion in Chinatown startled the hills of San Francisco, followed by cries, the jingle of window-glass, and the chattering of scared Chinese, and soon by comparative stillness. Sum Chow, with a flesh-wound in his cheek, came bounding down from the hospital into the arms of the doctor. Mingled cries were rising from the sick wards. The Run was filling with a crowd of all races that seemingly had sprung from nowhere.

Already smoke was pouring from the hospital windows.

"Conceal your cut," commanded the doctor. "Stand as though you were one of the crowd. In a moment the squad will be here, and then the ruthless water-snake men, with their chu-chu monster."

When the police thrust them aside, the two crossed to the door of a friendly merchant, and soon were hidden in the collecting throng. They stayed to see Ok Hut brought out insensible and bleeding from many wounds, and all the other inmates brought out safely. When Chow and the doctor knew that the building was doomed, they issued unmolested from the back of the store to another street, and made their way in the early light toward where little Fay lay awake, with her heart beating fast at the shouts and the clang of the fire-engines, with littlest slumbering Oo clasped tight to her bosom.

THAT evening they sat about the dinner-table, with Sum Ah and the helper Yang, who listened in admiration, while happy little Fay sat behind her spouse, and littlest Oo enchanted herself with the tip of the doctor's cue.

"You—you risked your life for me!" said Chow, with something glistening in his eye.

"And what is amusing," said the learned Dr. Wing Shee, who would have risked it again, "is that they have amputated one of Ok Hut's legs at the knee. So that the omen 'one and a half' meant simply that he was doomed to issue from this with only one and a half of his two original legs! I have to thank you for these very interesting and exciting days."

◆

"I asked her if she wasn't ashamed to get up so late; and she said she was; but that she had rather be ashamed than get up." KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN.

The Prophecy

By PEDRO ANTONIO DE ALARCÓN

Pedro Antº de Alarcon

I DON'T remember what day of August in the year 1816 it was that there came to the doors of the captain-general of Granada a certain ragged and uncouth gypsy, seventy years of age, by trade a sheep-shearer, by name Heredia, astride of a lean and shambling black donkey whose whole equipment consisted of a halter about its neck. The man, immediately on dismounting, said:

"I want to see the captain-general."

Needless to say such presumption awoke in turn the resistance of the sentinel, the laugh of the orderlies, and the doubt and hesitancy of the *aides-de-camp*, before he was brought to the notice of the Most Excellent Señor Don Eugenio Portocarrero, then captain-general of the ancient kingdom of Granada; but as that dignitary was a man of kindly disposition, and already knew of Heredia, renowned for his tricks, his bargains, and his love for his neighbour's goods, order was given to let the gypsy enter.

Once within the office, he fell on his knees, exclaiming, "Blessed be Mary, Most Holy, and long life to your honour, ruler of this little world."

"Get up and leave off ceremony and say to me what you have to tell," replied the count with seeming severity.

Heredia at once drew a long face, and said, "Well, my lord, I have come that the thousand *reales* may be given me."

"What thousand *reales?*"

"Those offered a few days ago by proclamation to anyone bringing information about Parrón."

"Indeed! You knew him, then?"

"No, sir."

"Well?"

"I know him now."

"How?"

"Very simply; I tracked him, I saw him, I bring the information, I claim the reward."

"Are you sure you have seen him?" said the captain-general, with an interest that overcame his doubt.

The gypsy burst out laughing, and said: "It's very evident that your honour thinks 'this gypsy is like them all, and wants to cheat me.' May God never forgive me if I lie! I saw Parrón yesterday."

"But do you realize the importance of what you are saying? Do you know that for years we have pursued this monster, this bloody bandit, whom nobody knows or has ever seen? Do you know that every day, in different parts of the *sierra*, he robs wayfarers and then shoots them, for, as he says, dead men tell no tales; and by this means only has he escaped being brought to justice? Finally, do you know that to see Parrón means death?"

The gypsy laughed again, and said: "Doesn't your honour know that what a gypsy cannot do, no one on earth can? Does anyone know when our laughing or crying is real? Does your honour know a fox as tricky as we are? I repeat, general, that not only have I seen Parrón, but I have talked with him."

"Where?"

"On the road to Tózar."

"Give me proof."

"Listen, your honour! Yesterday morning, eight days since, my donkey and I fell into the hands of some robbers. They bound me fast, and led me through some bewildering hollows till we came to the clearing where the bandits camped; a cruel suspicion laid hold on me. 'Can these be Parrón's people?' I was constantly asking myself; 'If so, there's no remedy, for this devil has decreed that eyes that have seen his face shall never see another.'

"While I was thus cogitating, there approached me a man, strangely but elegantly dressed, who, slapping me on the shoulder, said, 'Friend! I am Parrón!'

"To hear this and fall backward was one and the same thing. The bandit burst out laughing. I arose, trembling, fell on my knees, and cried out in every tone of voice I could muster, 'Blessed be thy soul, king of men! Who would not have known thee by the princely bearing God has given thee! May there be mothers to bear more such sons! Let me kiss you, my son! May this little gypsy die in torment if he was not wishing to meet you and tell your fortune, and kiss your lordly hands. Behold me at your service. Do you want to know how to trade dead donkeys for live ones? Do you want to sell your old horses for the price of young ones? Do you want to teach French to a mule?'"

The Count of Montijo could not suppress a laugh. Then he asked, "And what said Parrón to all this; what did he do?"

"The same as your honour, he laughed with all his might."

"And you?"

"I, my lord, laughed too, while tears as big as oranges ran down my cheeks."

"Proceed!"

"Presently he held out his hand to me, and said, 'Friend, you are the only man of talent that has fallen into my power; all the others have had the bad taste to annoy me by weeping and wailing and the like nonsense, which puts me into a bad humour; you, alone, have made me laugh, and if it were not for these tears——'

"'What? Good Lord, they are for joy!'

"'I believe it. Devil knows it's the first time for six or seven years that I have laughed; truth is, I haven't wept either. But let us hasten. Eh, boys?'

"For Parrón to say this, and for me to be surrounded by a ring of blunderbusses was quicker than a wink. 'Lord, have mercy on me!' I began to screech.

"'Halt!' cried Parrón. 'We are not ready for this yet. I called you to find out what you took from this man.'

"'A donkey with his hide on.'

"'Any money?'

"'Three *duros* and seventy *reales*.'

"'Now, then, leave us alone,' and they all withdrew.

"'Now, tell me my fortune,' said the robber, extending his hand to me. I took hold of it and thought a moment. I knew I was in a position to speak freely, so I said to him, with all the conviction of my heart: 'Parrón, sooner or later, whether you take my life or leave it to me, you will die on the gallows!'

"'I know that already,' answered the bandit with perfect calmness. 'Tell me when!'

"I began to consider. This man, said I to myself, is going to free me; tomorrow I'll be in Granada, and peach; the next day they'll take him; then the trial will begin. 'Do you ask when?' I said, aloud. 'Then, take notice, it will be during next month.'

"Parrón shuddered and so did I, fearing my love of fortune-telling would be my death.

"'Look you, gypsy,' replied Parrón, very deliberately, 'you will remain in my power, and if by the end of next month they do not hang me, I will hang you, as sure as they hanged my father. If I die by that time, you will go free.'

"'Much obliged,' said I to myself, 'to pardon me after death,' and I repented for having made the time so short. We stayed at the aforesaid camp, and I was locked up in a cave, while Parrón mounted his mare and took the track through the bushes."

"All right," said the Count, "I understand, Parrón is dead; you are free; and therefore you know his whereabouts."

"Quite the contrary, my general! Parrón is alive! And now comes the blackest part of my story.

"A week passed without the captain coming to see us, and, as far as I could make out, he had not shown himself in the neighbourhood since the evening I told his fortune; a thing not at all extraordinary, as my guards told me. For, do you know, the chief goes to hell occasionally, and doesn't return till it suits him. The fact is, we know nothing whatever of him during these long absences. About this time, by force of entreaty, and having told the fortunes of the band, prognosticating freedom from hanging and comfortable old age for all, I had succeeded in getting them to take me out of the cave, evenings, and bind me to a tree, for I was smothering with heat in the cell. Needless to say, there was a pair of watchers continually at my side.

"One evening, about six o'clock, the robbers who had been on 'duty' by command of Parrón's lieutenant returned to camp, bringing with them a miserable reaper, forty to fifty years old, manacled, and crying fit to break one's heart. 'Give me back my twenty *duros!*' he said. 'Ah, if you only knew what it cost me to earn them: a whole summer's reaping in the sun!

A whole summer away from wife and children! and so I scraped together by my toil and self-denial this sum, that we might live this winter, and that on reaching home I might embrace them, and pay the debts the unfortunate ones have contracted, so that they might live. Ought I to lose this money, which is a fortune to me? Pity, gentlemen! Give me my twenty *duros* for the sake of the most Holy Mary of Sorrows!'

"A mocking laugh answered the plaints of the old man. Bound as I was to the tree I shook with horror! For gypsies, too, have families.

"'Don't be a fool!' finally said a bandit, going to the reaper. 'You do wrong in thinking of money when more important matters should occupy your thoughts.'

"'How?' said the reaper, not supposing there could be a greater misfortune than his children going without bread.

"'You are in Parrón's hands.'

"'Parrón? I don't know him—never heard of him; I come a long way; I belong in Alicante, and was reaping in Sevilla.'

"'But, my friend, Parrón means death. Everyone that falls into our hands must die; therefore, make your will in two minutes, and your peace with God in the next two. Make ready! Aim! You have four minutes.'

"'I am going to improve them. Hear me for pity's sake.'

"'Speak.'

"'I have six children and one unfortunate—widow, I will say, since I must die, for I read in your eyes that you are worse than wild beasts—yes, worse—for beasts of the same species do not destroy each other. Oh! pardon! I know now what I say. Gentlemen, some one of you must be a father! Is there not a father among you? Do you know what it is to have children starving all winter? Do you know what it is for a mother to see the children of her blood die, crying, "I am hungry; I am cold"? Gentlemen, I don't want to live without them; for what would life be to me?—a chain of toil and privation. But I must live for my children's sake—oh, my children, children of my heart!'

"The father dragged himself along the ground and turned his face to the robbers. Such a face! It seemed like one of those saints that King Nero threw to the tigers, as the preachers say. The robbers felt something stir within their breasts; then they looked at one another, and, seeing all were of one accord, one made bold to say—"

"What said he?" asked the captain-general, deeply affected by the story.

"He said, 'Comrades, what we are about to do must never be known to Parrón.'

"'Never! Never!' muttered the rest of the bandits.

"'Go thy way, good man,' said another, almost weeping, and I made signs to the reaper that he should instantly go.

"'Quick! March!' they said, and all turned their backs. The reaper held out his hand beseechingly.

"'Aren't you satisfied?' growled one. 'Do you want your money, besides? Go! Go! Do not try our patience!'

"The poor father went away weeping, and soon was out of sight.

"Perhaps a half hour later, which was taken up by the bandits swearing one another not to tell the captain they had freed a man, there suddenly appeared Parrón, leading the reaper alongside his mare.

"The bandits fell back astounded. Parrón dismounted, leisurely, unslung his two-barrelled carbine, and aiming at his comrades said, 'Fools! Idiots! I know not why I do not shoot every one of you! Quick! give back to this man the twenty *duros* you took from him!' The robbers produced the money and gave it to the reaper, who cast himself at the feet of the bandit chief who had so kind a heart.

"Parrón said to him, 'By the peace of God! without your directions I never should have found them. Now, you see you mistrusted me without cause. I have fulfilled my promise—you have your twenty *duros*. Now be off!'

"The reaper kissed him again and again, and departed full of joy; but he had gone hardly fifty paces when his benefactor called him anew, and the poor man hastened to retrace his steps.

"'What is your command?' said he, anxious to do a service to him who had restored happiness to his family.

"'Do you know Parrón?' asked the man himself.

"'I know him not.'

"'You mistake,' said the chief, 'I am he!'

"The reaper stood stupefied. Parrón brought his carbine to his cheek and fired both barrels at the reaper, who fell rolling on the ground.

"'May you be accursed,' were the only words he spoke. During the terror that blinded me, I felt the tree to which I was bound quiver slightly, and knew my bonds tre loose. One of the balls after having ounded the reaper, hit the cord which held ie fast, and cut it. I concealed my free-om and waited a chance for escape. Mean-me, Parrón, pointing to the reaper, said › his men, 'Now you can rob him. You ack of idiots! you lot of fools! to free this ian that he might go as he did, howling long the highway! Fortunately it was I iat met him, and learned what had hap-ened, for had it been the soldiers, he would ave shown them the way to this camp, ime as he did to me, and we would all ave been in prison by this. See the result f robbing and not killing; but enough of reaching, bury this body before it rot.'

"While the robbers were digging a grave, 'arrón was lunching, with his back to me. ittle by little I moved from the tree, and ipped down into a hollow nearby. It 'as already night, and shielded by the arkness, I set out with all haste. By the tarlight I found my donkey, who was uietly feeding, tied to an ash-tree. I iounted him and never stopped till I got ere. Therefore, my Lord, give me the iousand *reales*, and I will put you on 'arrón's track, who, by the by, has kept iy three-and-a-half *duros*."

The gypsy, having given a description of he bandit, afterward received the promised eward, and departed from the general's ffice, leaving the count and a person then resent, from whom I had these details, tterly confounded. It remains to be seen vhether Heredia guessed aright when he oretold Parrón's destiny.

Fifteen days after the scene we have just lescribed took place, about nine in the iorning, a large crowd of idlers attended he assembling of two companies of soldiers n the streets of San Juan de Dios and part f that of San Felipe, in the aforesaid capi-al city, who, about a half-hour later, were o set out in quest of Parrón, the description of his hiding-place, his person, and iis comrades having finally been approved y the Count of Montijo. The interest and xcitement of the public was extraordinary, nd none the less so was the soberness with vhich the soldiers took leave of families nd friends before starting on so important n expedition, such fear had Parrón aroused hroughout the old kingdom of Granada.

"Seems we are ready to fall in," said one oldier to his comrade. "But I don't see Cabo-López."

"That's strange, too, for he was always on hand first of any when there was call of hunting Parrón. He hated him with all his heart."

"So, don't you know what has happened?" said a third one, joining in the talk.

"Hello! this must be our new man. How do you like our company?"

"Very well, indeed," answered the one inquired of, a man of pale complexion and fine shape, which was partly hidden by the uniform.

"What were you saying?" asked the first.

"Ah yes! Cabo-López is dead," replied the pale-faced one.

"Manuel! What are you talking about? This can't be. I, myself, saw López this morning, surely as I see you now."

He called Manuel coolly said "Half an hour ago Parrón killed him."

"Parrón! Where?"

"Right here in Granada. They found López's dead body on the Dog's Hill."

All kept silence except Manuel, who began to whistle a patriotic air.

"Eleven soldiers gone in six days," said a sergeant. "Parrón means to exterminate us! But how comes it that he is in Granada? Aren't we going to look for him in the Sierra-de-Loja?"

Manuel ceased whistling, and said with his usual recklessness, "An old woman, who saw the deed, says, that since he killed López, she hopes if we look for him we may have the pleasure of seeing him."

"Comrade! aren't you pretty bold to speak of Parrón with such contempt?"

"Well, is Parrón more than a man!" asked Manuel with a shrug.

Just then "Fall in!" was shouted by various tongues. The two companies formed and roll-call was begun.

Now it happened that at the moment Heredia was going by, and, like everyone else, stopped to admire the soldiery.

It seemed as if Manuel, the new soldier, gave a start, and fell back a little so as to hide behind his comrades, when Heredia caught sight of him, gave a yell, and, jumping as if he had stepped on a viper, started to run up San Yeronimos Street.

Manuel raised his musket and aimed at the gypsy, but another soldier was quick enough to strike the gun up, and the shot was spent in the air.

"He's crazy! Manuel has gone mad! A soldier has lost his wits!" was shouted in succession by the lookers-on, and officers, sergeants, and countrymen fell on the man, who was struggling to escape, and whom, after they had subdued him, they plied with questions, accusations, and insults which drew from him no response whatever. Meantime, Heredia had been seized by some passers-by, who seeing him running and hearing the musket-shot, took him for a malefactor.

"Lead me to the captain-general," said the gypsy; "I must speak to the Count of Montijo."

"Count of Montijo, indeed! Whom have you killed?" asked his captors. "Here comes the guard and they'll know what to do with you."

"I think so, too," said Heredia, "but be careful not to let Parrón kill me."

"What do you mean by Parrón? What's the man talking about?"

"Come and you will see," and, so saying, the gypsy made them take him to the commandant of the platoon, and pointing to Manuel, he said: "Commandant, this is Parrón, and I am the gypsy who two weeks ago gave a description of him to the Count of Montijo."

"Parrón! Parrón is taken! A soldier proved to be Parrón!" shouted the crowd.

"No doubt about it," said the commandant, reading the order given him by the captain-general. "We certainly have been very stupid; but who would have thought of looking for the robber chief among the very soldiers that were searching for him?"

"Fool that I am," Parrón was saying to himself, regarding the gypsy with eyes like a wounded lion's. "He is the only man to whom I ever granted life. I deserve what has happened."

The week following, Parrón was executed, and so the gypsy's prophecy was literally fulfilled.

* * *

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

By WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honeybee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

The Perils of Certain English Prisoners

By CHARLES DICKENS

Charles Dickens

[To be completed in Three Parts. Chapter II by Wilkie Collins.]

CHAPTER I

THE ISLAND OF SILVER-STORE

It was in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty-four, that I, Gill Davis to command, His Mark, having then the honour to be a private in the Royal Marines, stood a-leaning over the bulwarks of the armed sloop *Christopher Columbus*, in the South American waters off the Mosquito shore.

My lady remarks to me, before I go any further, that there is no such Christian-name as Gill, and that her confident opinion is that the name given to me in the baptism wherein I was made, &c., was Gilbert. She is certain to be right, but I never heard of it. I was a foundling child, picked up somewhere or another, and I always understood my Christian-name to be Gill. It is true that I was called Gills when employed at Snorridge Bottom betwixt Chatham and Maidstone to frighten birds; but that had nothing to do with the baptism wherein I was made, &c., and wherein a number of things were promised for me by somebody, who let me alone ever afterwards as to performing any of them, and who, I consider, must have been the Beadle. Such name of Gills was entirely owing to my cheeks, or gills, which at that time of my life were of a raspy description.

My lady stops me again, before I go any further, by laughing exactly in her old way and waving the feather of her pen at me. That action on her part calls to my mind as I look at her hand with the rings on it—Well! I won't! To be sure it will come in, in its own place. But it's always strange to me, noticing the quiet hand, and noticing it (as I have done, you know, so many times) a-fondling children and grandchildren asleep, to think that when blood and honour were up—there! I won't! not at present!—Scratch it out.

She won't scratch it out, and quite honourable: because we have made an understanding that everything is to be taken down, and that nothing that is once taken down shall be scratched out. I have the great misfortune not to be able to read and write, and I am speaking my true and faithful account of those Adventures, and my lady is writing it, word for word.

I say, there I was, a-leaning over the bulwarks of the sloop *Christopher Columbus* in the South American waters off the Mosquito shore: a subject of his Gracious Majesty King George of England, and a private in the Royal Marines.

In those climates, you don't want to do much. I was doing nothing. I was thinking of the shepherd (my father, I wonder?) on the hill-sides by Snorridge Bottom, with a long staff, and with a rough white coat in all weathers all the year round, who used to let me lie in a corner of his hut by night, and who used to let me go about with him and his sheep by day when I could get nothing else to do, and who used to give me so little of his victuals and so much of his staff, that I ran away from him—which was what he wanted all along, I expect—to be knocked about the world in preference to Snorridge Bottom. I had been knocked about the world for nine-

and-twenty years in all, when I stood looking along those bright blue South American Waters. Looking after the shepherd, I may say. Watching him in a half-waking dream, with my eyes half-shut, as he, and his flock of sheep, and his two dogs, seemed to move away from the ship's side, far away over the blue water, and go right down into the sky.

"It's rising out of the water, steady," a voice said close to me. I had been thinking on so, that it like woke me with a start, though it was no stranger voice than the voice of Harry Charker, my own comrade.

"What's rising out of the water, steady?" I asked my comrade.

"What?" says he. "The Island."

"O! The Island!" says I, turning my eyes towards it. "True. I forgot the Island."

"Forgot the port you're going to? That's odd, ain't it?"

"It is odd," says I.

"And odd," he said, slowly considering with himself, "ain't even. Is it, Gill?"

He had always a remark just like that to make, and seldom another. As soon as he had brought a thing round to what it was not, he was satisfied. He was one of the best of men, and, in a certain sort of a way, one with the least to say for himself. I qualify it, because, besides being able to read and write like a Quartermaster, he had always one most excellent idea in his mind. That was, Duty. Upon my soul, I don't believe, though I admire learning beyond everything, that he could have got a better idea out of all the books in the world, if he had learnt them every word, and been the cleverest of scholars.

My comrade and I had been quartered in Jamaica, and from there we had been drafted off to the British settlement of Belize, lying away west and north of the Mosquito coast. At Belize there had been great alarm of one cruel gang of pirates (there were always more pirates than enough in those Caribbean Seas), and as they got the better of our English cruisers by running into out-of-the-way creeks and shallows, and taking the land when they were hotly pressed, the governor of Belize had received orders from home to keep a sharp look-out for them along shore. Now, there was an armed sloop came once a-year from Port Royal, Jamaica, to the Island, laden with all manner of necessaries, to eat, and to drink, and to wear, and to use in various ways; and it was aboard of that sloop which had touched at Belize, that I was a-standing, leaning over the bulwarks.

The Island was occupied by a very small English colony. It had been given the name of Silver-Store. The reason of its being so called, was, that the English colony owned and worked a silver mine over on the mainland, in Honduras, and used this Island as a safe and convenient place to store their silver in, until it was annually fetched away by the sloop. It was brought down from the mine to the coast on the backs of mules, attended by friendly Indians and guarded by white men; from thence it was conveyed over to Silver-Store, when the weather was fair, in the canoes of that country; from Silver-Store, it was carried to Jamaica by the armed sloop once a-year, as I have already mentioned; from Jamaica, it went, of course, all over the world.

How I came to be aboard the armed sloop, is easily told. Four-and-twenty marines under command of a lieutenant—that officer's name was Linderwood—had been told off at Belize, to proceed to Silver-Store, in aid of boats and seamen stationed there for the chase of the Pirates. The Island was considered a good post of observation against the pirates, both by land and sea; neither the pirate ship nor yet her boats had been seen by any of us, but they had been so much heard of, that the reinforcement was sent. Of that party, I was one. It included a corporal and a sergeant. Charker was corporal, and the sergeant's name was Drooce. He was the most tyrannical non-commissioned officer in His Majesty's service.

The night came on, soon after I had had the foregoing words with Charker. All the wonderful bright colours went out of the sea and sky in a few minutes, and all the stars in the Heavens seemed to shine out together, and to look down at themselves in the sea, over one another's shoulders, millions deep. Next morning, we cast anchor off the Island. There was a snug harbour within a little reef; there was a sandy beach; there were cocoa-nut trees with high straight stems, quite bare, and foliage at the top like plumes of magnificent green feathers; there were all the objects that are usually seen in those parts, and I am not going to describe them, having something else to tell about.

Great rejoicings, to be sure, were made on our arrival. All the flags in the place were hoisted, all the guns in the place were fired, and all the people in the place came down to look at us. One of those Sambo fellows—they call those natives Sambos, when they are half-negro and half-Indian—had come off outside the reef, to pilot us in, and remained on board after we had let go our anchor. He was called Christian George King, and was fonder of all hands than anybody else was. Now, I confess, for myself, that on that first day, if I had been captain of the *Christopher Columbus*, instead of private in the Royal Marines, I should have kicked Christian George King—who was no more a Christian than he was a King or a George—over the side, without exactly knowing why, except that it was the right thing to do.

But, I must likewise confess, that I was not in a particularly pleasant humour, when I stood under arms that morning, aboard the *Christopher Columbus* in the harbour of the island of Silver-Store. I had had a hard life, and the life of the English on the Island seemed too easy and too gay to please me. "Here you are," I thought to myself, "good scholars and good livers; able to read what you like, able to write what you like, able to eat and drink what you like, and spend what you like, and do what you like; and much *you* care for a poor, ignorant Private in the Royal Marines! Yet it's hard, too, I think, that you should have all the half-pence, and I all the kicks; you all the smooth, and I all the rough; you all the oil, and I all the vinegar." It was as envious a thing to think as might be, let alone its being nonsensical; but, I thought it. I took it so much amiss, that, when a very beautiful young English lady came aboard, I grunted to myself, "Ah! *you* have got a lover, I'll be bound!" As if there was any new offense to me in that, if she had!

She was sister to the captain of our sloop, who had been in a poor way for some time, and who was so ill then that he was obliged to be carried ashore. She was the child of a military officer, and had come out there with her sister, who was married to one of the owners of the silver-mine, and who had three children with her. It was easy to see that she was the light and spirit of the Island. After I had got a good look at her, I grunted to myself again, in an even worse state of mind than before, "I'll be damned, if I don't hate him, whoever he is!"

My officer, Lieutenant Linderwood, was as ill as the captain of the sloop, and was carried ashore, too. They were both young men of about my age, who had been delicate in the West India climate. I even took *that* in bad part. I thought I was much fitter for the work than they were, and that if all of us had our deserts, I should be both of them rolled into one. (It may be imagined what sort of an officer of marines I should have made, without the power of reading a written order. And as to any knowledge how to command the sloop—Lord! I should have sunk her in a quarter of an hour!)

However, such were my reflections; and when we men were ashore and dismissed, I strolled about the place along with Charker, making my observations in a similar spirit.

It was a pretty place: in all its arrangements partly South American and partly English, and very agreeable to look at on that account, being like a bit of home that had got chipped off and had floated away to that spot, accommodating itself to circumstances as it drifted along. The huts of the Sambos, to the number of five-and-twenty, perhaps, were down by the beach to the left of the anchorage. On the right was a sort of barrack, with a South American Flag and the Union Jack, flying from the same staff, where the little English colony could all come together, if they saw occasion. It was a walled square of building, with a sort of pleasure-ground inside, and inside that again a sunken block like a powder magazine, with a little square trench round it, and steps down to the door. Charker and I were looking in at the gate, which was not guarded; and I had said to Charker, in reference to the bit like a powder magazine, "That's where they keep the silver you see"; and Charker had said to me, after thinking it over, "And silver ain't gold. Is it Gill?" when the beautiful young English lady I had been so bilious about, looked out of a door, or a window—at all events looked out, from under a bright awning. She no sooner saw us two in uniform, than she came out so quickly that she was still putting on her broad Mexican hat of plaited straw when we saluted.

"Would you like to come in," she said, "and see the place? It is rather a curious place."

We thanked the young lady, and said we didn't wish to be troublesome; but, she said it could be no trouble to an English soldier's daughter, to show English soldiers how their countrymen and countrywomen fared, so far away from England; and consequently we saluted again, and went in. Then, as we stood in the shade, she showed us (being as affable as beautiful), how the different families lived in their separate houses, and how there was a general house for stores, and a general reading-room, and a general room for music and dancing, and a room for church; and how there were other houses on the rising ground called the Signal Hill, where they lived in the hotter weather.

"Your officer has been carried up there," she said, "and my brother, too, for the better air. At present, our few residents are dispersed over both spots: deducting, that is to say, such of our number as are always going to, or coming from, or staying at, the Mine."

("*He* is among one of those parties," I thought, "and I wish somebody would knock his head off.")

"Some of our married ladies live here," she said, "during at least half the year, as lonely as widows, with their children."

"Many children here, ma'am?"

"Seventeen. There are thirteen married ladies, and there are eight like me."

There were not eight like her—there was not one like her—in the world. She meant single.

"Which, with about thirty Englishmen of various degrees," said the young lady, "form the little colony now on the Island. I don't count the sailors, for they don't belong to us. Nor the soldiers," she gave us a gracious smile when she spoke of the soldiers, "for the same reason."

"Nor the Sambos, ma'am," said I.

"No."

"Under your favour, and with your leave, ma'am," said I, "are they trustworthy?"

"Perfectly! We are all very kind to them, and they are very grateful to us."

"Indeed, ma'am? Now — Christian George King——?"

"Very much attached to us all. Would die for us."

She was, as in my uneducated way I have observed very beautiful women almost always to be, so composed, that her composure gave great weight to what she said, and I believed it.

Then, she pointed out to us the building like a powder magazine, and explained to us in what manner the silver was brought from the mine, and was brought over from the mainland, and was stored there. The *Christopher Columbus* would have a rich lading, she said, for there had been a great yield that year, a much richer yield than usual, and there was a chest of jewels besides the silver.

When we had looked about us, and were getting sheepish, through fearing we were troublesome, she turned us over to a young woman, English born but West India bred, who served her as her maid. This young woman was the widow of a non-commissioned officer in a regiment of the line. She had got married and widowed at St. Vincent, with only a few months between the two events. She was a little saucy woman, with a bright pair of eyes, rather a neat little foot and figure, and rather a neat little turned-up nose. The sort of young woman, I considered at the time, who appeared to invite you to give her a kiss, and who would have slapped your face if you accepted the invitation.

I couldn't make out her name at first; for, when she gave it in answer to my inquiry, it sounded like Beltot, which didn't sound right. But, when we became better acquainted—which was while Charker and I were drinking sugar-cane sangaree, which she made in a most excellent manner—I found that her Christian name was Isabella, which they shorted into Bell, and that the name of the deceased non-commissioned officer was Tott. Being the kind of neat little woman it was natural to make a toy of—I never saw a woman so like a toy in my life—she had got the plaything name of Belltott. In short, she had no other name on the island. Even Mr. Commissioner Pordage (and *he* was a grave one!) formally addressed her as Mrs. Belltott. But, I shall come to Mr. Commissioner Pordage presently.

The name of the captain of the sloop was Captain Maryon, and therefore it was no news to hear from Mrs. Belltott, that his sister, the beautiful unmarried young English lady, was Miss Maryon. The novelty was, that her Christian name was Marion too. Marion Maryon. Many a time I have run off those two names in my thoughts, like a bit of verse. Oh many, and many, and many a time!

We saw out all the drink that was produced, like good men and true, and then took our leaves, and went down to the beach. The weather was beautiful; the wind steady, low, and gentle; the island, a picture; the sea, a picture; the sky, a picture. In that country there are two rainy seasons in the year. One sets in at about our English Midsummer; the other, about a fortnight after our English Michaelmas. It was the beginning of August at that time; the first of these rainy seasons was well over; and everything was in its most beautiful growth, and had its loveliest look upon it.

"They enjoy themselves here," I says to Charker, turning surly again. "This is better than private-soldiering."

We had come down to the beach, to be

friendly with the boat's crew who were camped and hutted there; and we were approaching towards their quarters over the sand, when Christian George King comes up from the landing-place at a wolf's trot, crying, "Yup, So-Jeer!"—which was that Sambo Pilot's barbarous way of saying, Hallo, Soldier! I have stated myself to be a man of no learning, and, if I entertain prejudices, I hope allowance may be made. I will now confess to one. It may be a right one or it may be a wrong one; but, I never did like Natives, except in the form of oysters.

So, when Christian George King, who was individually unpleasant to me besides, comes a-trotting along the sand, clucking, "Yup, So-Jeer!" I had a thundering good mind to let fly at him with my right. I certainly should have done it, but that it would have exposed me to reprimand.

"Yup, So-Jeer!" says he. "Bad job."

"What do you mean?" says I.

"Yup, So-Jeer!" says he, "Ship leakee."

"Ship leaky?" says I.

"Iss," says he, with a nod that looked as if it was jerked out of him by a most violent hiccup—which is the way with those savages.

I cast my eyes at Charker, and we both heard the pumps going aboard the sloop, and saw the signal run up, "Come on board; hands wanted from the shore." In no time some of the sloop's liberty men were already running down to the water's edge, and the party of seamen, under orders against the Pirates, were putting off to the *Columbus* in two boats.

"O Christian George King sar berry sorry!" says that Sambo vagabond, then. "Christian George King cry, English fashion!" His English fashion of crying was to screw his black knuckles into his eyes, howl like a dog, and roll himself on his back on the sand. It was trying not to kick him, but I gave Charker the word, "Double-quick, Harry!" and we got down to the water's edge, and got on board the sloop.

By some means or other, she had sprung such a leak, that no pumping would keep her free; and what between the two fears that she would go down in the harbour, and that, even if she did not, all the supplies she had brought for the little colony would be destroyed by the sea-water as it rose in her, there was great confusion. In the midst of it, Captain Maryon was heard hailing from the beach. He had been carried down in his hammock, and looked very bad; but he insisted on being stood there on his feet; and I saw him, myself, come off in the boat, sitting upright in the stern-sheets, as if nothing was wrong with him.

A quick sort of council was held, and Captain Maryon soon resolved that we must all fall to work to get the cargo out, and that when that was done, the guns and heavy matters must be got out, and that the sloop must be hauled ashore, and careened, and the leak stopped. We were all mustered (the Pirate-Chase party volunteering), and told off into parties, with so many hours of spell and so many hours of relief, and we all went at it with a will. Christian George King was entered one of the party in which I worked, at his own request, and he went at it with as good a will as any of the rest. He went at it with so much heartiness, to say the truth, that he rose in my good opinion almost as fast as the water rose in the ship. Which was fast enough, and faster.

Mr. Commissioner Pordage kept in a red-and-black japanned box, like a family lump-sugar box, some document or other, which some Sambo chief or other had got drunk and spilt some ink over (as well as I could understand the matter), and by that means had given up lawful possession of the Island. Through having hold of this box, Mr. Pordage got his title of Commissioner. He was styled Consul too, and spoke of himself as "Government."

He was a stiff-jointed, high-nosed old gentleman, without an ounce of fat on him, of a very angry temper and a very yellow complexion. Mrs. Commissioner Pordage, making allowance for difference of sex, was much the same. Mr. Kitten, a small, youngish, bald, botanical and mineralogical gentleman, also connected with the mine—but everybody there was that, more or less—was sometimes called by Mr. Commissioner Pordage, his Vice-Commissioner, and sometimes his Deputy-Consul. Or sometimes he spoke of Mr. Kitten, merely as being "under Government."

The beach was beginning to be a lively scene with the preparations for careening the sloop, and, with cargo, and spars, and rigging, and water-casks, dotted about it, and with temporary quarters for the men rising up there out of such sails and odds and ends as could be best set on one side to make them when Mr. Commissioner Pordage comes down in a high fluster, and asks for Captain Maryon. The Captain, ill as he was, was slung in his hammock betwixt two trees, that he might direct; and he raised his head, and answered for himself.

"Captain Maryon," cries Mr. Commissioner Pordage, "this is not official. This is not regular."

"Sir," says the Captain, "it hath been arranged with the clerk and supercargo, that you should be communicated with, and requested to render any little assistance that may lie in your power. I am quite certain that hath been duly done."

"Captain Maryon," replies Mr. Commissioner Pordage, "there hath been no written correspondence. No documents have passed, no memoranda have been made, no minutes have been made, no entries and counter-entries appear in the official muniments. This is indecent. I call upon you, sir, to desist, until all is regular, or Government will take this up."

"Sir," says Captain Maryon, chafing a little, as he looked out of his hammock; "between the chances of Government taking this up, and my ship taking herself down, I much prefer to trust myself to the former."

"You do, sir?" cries Mr. Commissioner Pordage

"I do, sir," says Captain Maryon, lying down again.

"Then, Mr. Kitten," says the Commissioner, "send up instantly for my Diplomatic coat."

He was dressed in a linen suit at that moment; but, Mr. Kitten started off himself and brought down the Diplomatic coat, which was a blue cloth one, gold-laced, and with a crown on the button.

"Now, Mr. Kitten," says Pordage, "I instruct you, as Vice-Commissioner, and Deputy-Consul of this place, to demand of Captain Maryon, of the sloop *Christopher Columbus*, whether he drives me to the act of putting this coat on?"

"Mr. Pordage," says Captain Maryon, looking out of his hammock again, "as I can hear what you say, I can answer it without troubling the gentleman. I should be sorry that you should be at the pains of putting on too hot a coat on my account; but, otherwise, you may put it on hind-side before, or inside-out, or with your legs in the sleeves, or your head in the skirts, for any objection that I have to offer to your thoroughly pleasing yourself."

"Very good, Captain Maryon," says Pordage, in a tremendous passion. "Very good, sir. Be the consequences on your own head! Mr. Kitten, as it has come to this, help me on with it."

When he had given that order, he walked off in the coat, and all our names were taken, and I was afterwards told that Mr. Kitten wrote from his dictation more than a bushel of large paper on the subject, which cost more before it was done with, than ever could be calculated, and which only got done with after all, by being lost.

Our work went on merrily, nevertheless, and the *Christopher Columbus*, hauled up, lay helpless on her side like a great fish out of water. While she was in that state, there was a feast, or a ball, or an entertainment, or more properly all three together, given us in honour of the ship, and the ship's company, and the other visitors. At that assembly, I believe, I saw all the inhabitants then upon the Island, without any exception. I took no particular notice of more than a few, but I found it very agreeable in that little corner of the world to see the children, who were of all ages, and mostly very pretty—as they mostly are. There was one handsome elderly lady, with very dark eyes and gray hair, that I inquired about. I was told that her name was Mrs. Venning; and her married daughter, a fair, slight thing, was pointed out to me by the name of Fanny Fisher. Quite a child she looked, with a little copy of herself holding to her dress; and her husband, just come back from the mine, exceeding proud of her. They were a good-looking set of people on the whole, but I didn't like them. I was out of sorts; in conversation with Charker, I found fault with all of them. I said of Mrs. Venning, she was proud; of Mrs. Fisher, she was a delicate little baby-fool. What did I think of this one? Why, he was a fine gentleman. What did I say to that one? Why, she was a fine lady. What could you expect them to be (I asked Charker), nursed in that climate, with the tropical night shining for them, musical instruments playing to them, great trees bending over them, soft lamps lighting them, fire-flies sparkling in among them, bright flowers and birds brought into existence to please their eyes, delicious drinks to be had for the pouring out, delicious fruits to be got for the picking, and every one dancing and murmuring happily in the scented air, with the sea breaking low on the reef for a pleasant chorus.

"Fine gentlemen and fine ladies, Harry?" I says to Charker. "Yes, I think so! Dolls! Dolls! Not the sort of stuff for wear, that comes of poor private soldiering in the Royal Marines!"

However, I could not gainsay that they were very hospitable people, and that they treated us uncommonly well. Every man of us was at the entertainment, and Mrs. Belltott had more partners than she could dance with: though she danced all night, too. As to Jack (whether of the *Christopher Columbus*, or of the Pirate pursuit party, it made no difference), he danced with his brother Jack, danced with himself, danced with the moon, the stars, the trees, the prospect, anything. I didn't greatly take to the chief officer of that party, with his bright eyes, brown face, and easy figure. I didn't much like his way when he first happened to come where we were, with Miss Maryon on his arm. "O, Captain Carton," she says, "here are two friends of mine!" He says, "Indeed? These two Marines?"—meaning Charker and self. "Yes," says she, "I showed these two friends of mine when they first came, all the wonders of Silver-Store." He gave us a laughing look, and says he, "You are in luck, men. I would be disrated and go before the mast to-morrow, to be shown the way upward again by such a guide. You are in luck, men." When he had saluted, and he and the lady had waltzed away, I said, "You are a pretty fellow, too, to talk of luck. You may go to the Devil!"

Mr. Commissioner Pordage and Mrs. Commissioner, showed among the company on that occasion like the King and Queen of a much Greater Britain than Great Britain. Only two other circumstances in that jovial night made much separate impression on me. One was this. A man in our draft of marines, named Tom Packer, a wild, unsteady young fellow, but the son of a respectable shipwright in Portsmouth Yard, and a good scholar who had been well brought up, comes to me after a spell of dancing, and takes me aside by the elbow, and says, swearing angrily:

"Gill Davis, I hope I may not be the death of Sergeant Drooce one day!"

Now, I knew Drooce had always borne particularly hard on this man, and I knew this man to be of a very hot temper: so, I said:

"Tut, nonsense! don't talk so to me! If there's a man in the corps who scorns the name of an assassin, that man and Tom Packer are one."

Tom wipes his head, being in a mortal sweat, and says he:

"I hope so, but I can't answer for myself when he lords it over me, as he has just now done, before a woman. I tell you what, Gill! Mark my words! It will go hard with Sergeant Drooce, if ever we are in an engagement together, and he has to look to me to save him. Let him say a prayer then, if he knows one, for it's all over with him, and he is on his death-bed. Mark my words!"

I did mark his words, and very soon afterwards, too, as will shortly be taken down.

The other circumstance that I noticed at that ball, was, the gaiety and attachment of Christian George King. The innocent spirits that Sambo Pilot was in, and the impossibility he found himself under of showing all the little colony, but especially the ladies and children, how fond he was of them, how devoted to them, and how faithful to them for life and death, for present, future, and everlasting, made a great impression on me. If ever a man, Sambo or no Sambo, was trustful and trusted, to what may be called quite an infantine and sweetly beautiful extent, surely, I thought that morning when I did at last lie down to rest, it was that Sambo Pilot, Christian George King.

This may account for my dreaming of him. He stuck in my sleep, cornerwise, and I couldn't get him out. He was always flitting about me, dancing round me, and peeping in over my hammock, though I woke and dozed off again fifty times. At last, when I opened my eyes, there he really was, looking in at the open side of the little dark hut; which was made of leaves, and had Charker's hammock slung in it as well as mine.

"So-Jeer!" says he, in a sort of a low croak. "Yup!"

"Hallo!" says I, starting up. "What? You *are* there, are you?"

"Iss," says he. "Christian George King got news."

"What news has he got?"

"Pirates out!"

I was on my feet in a second. So was Charker. We were both aware that Captain Carton, in command of the boats, constantly watched the mainland for a secret signal, though, of course, it was not known to such as us what the signal was.

Christian George King had vanished before we touched the ground. But, the word was already passing from hut to hut to turn out quietly, and we knew that the nimble barbarian had got hold of the truth, or something near it.

In a space among the trees behind the encampment of us visitors, naval and military, was a snugly-screened spot, where we kept the stores that were in use, and did our cookery. The word was passed to assemble here. It was very quickly given, and was given (so far as we were concerned) by Sergeant Drooce, who was as good in a soldier point of view, as he was bad in a tyrannical one. We were ordered to drop into this space, quietly, behind the trees, one by one. As we assembled here, the seamen assembled too. Within ten minutes, as I should estimate, we were all here, except the usual guard upon the beach. The beach (we could see it through the wood) looked as it always had done in the hottest time of the day. The guard were in the shadow of the sloop's hull, and nothing was moving but the sea, and that moved very faintly. Work had always been knocked off at that hour, until the sun grew less fierce, and the sea-breeze rose; so that its being holiday with us, made no difference, just then, in the look of the place. But I may mention that it was a holiday, and the first we had had since our hard work began. Last night's ball had been given, on the leak's being repaired, and the careening done. The worst of the work was over, and to-morrow we were to begin to get the sloop afloat again.

We marines were now drawn up here under arms. The chase-party were drawn up separate. The men of the *Columbus* were drawn up separate. The officers stepped out into the midst of the three parties, and spoke so as all might hear. Captain Carton was the officer in command, and he had a spyglass in his hand. His coxswain stood by him with another spyglass, and with a slate on which he seemed to have been taking down signals.

"Now, men!" says Captain Carton; "I have to let you know, for your satisfaction: Firstly, that there are ten pirate-boats, strongly manned and armed, lying hidden up a creek yonder on the coast, under the overhanging branches of the dense trees. Secondly, that they will certainly come out this night when the moon rises, on a pillaging and murdering expedition, of which some part of the mainland is the object. Thirdly —don't cheer, men!—that we will give chase, and, if we can get at them, rid the world of them, please God!"

Nobody spoke, that I heard, and nobody moved, that I saw. Yet there was a kind of ring, as if every man answered and approved with the best blood that was inside of him.

"Sir," says Captain Maryon, "I beg to volunteer on this service, with my boats. My people volunteer, to the ship's boys."

"In His Majesty's name and service," the other answers, touching his hat, "I accept your aid with pleasure. Lieutenant Linderwood, how will you divide your men?"

I was ashamed—I give it out to be written down as large and plain as possible—I was heart and soul ashamed of my thoughts of those two sick officers, Captain Maryon and Lieutenant Linderwood, when I saw them, then and there. The spirit in those two gentlemen beat down their illness (and very ill I knew them to be) like Saint George beating down the Dragon. Pain and weakness, want of ease and want of rest, had no more place in their minds than fear itself. Meaning now to express for my lady to write down, exactly what I felt then and there, I felt this: "You two brave fellows that I had been so grudgeful of, I know that if you were dying you would put it off to get up and do your best, and then you would be so modest that in lying down again to die, you would hardly say, 'I did it!'"

It did me good. It really did me good.

But, to go back to where I broke off. Says Captain Carton to Lieutenant Linderwood, "Sir, how will you divide your men? There is not room for all; and a few men should, in any case, be left here."

There was some debate about it. At last, it was resolved to leave eight Marines and four seamen on the Island, besides the sloop's two boys. And because it was considered that the friendly Sambos would only want to be commanded in case of any danger (though none at all was apprehended there), the officers were in favour of leaving the two non-commissioned officers, Drooce and Charker. It was a heavy disappointment to them, just as my being one of the left was a heavy disappointment to me— then, but not soon afterwards. We men drew lots for it, and I drew "Island." So did Tom Packer. So, of course, did four more of our rank and file.

When this was settled, verbal instructions were given to all hands to keep the intended expedition secret, in order that the women and children might not be alarmed, or the expedition put in a difficulty by more volunteers. The assembly was to be on that same spot at sunset. Every man was to keep up an appearance, meanwhile, of occupying himself in his usual way. That is to say, every man excepting four old trusty seamen, who were appointed, with an officer, to see to the arms and ammunition, and to muffle the rullocks of the boats, and to make everything as trim and swift and silent as it could be made.

The Sambo Pilot had been present all the while, in case of his being wanted, and had said to the officer in command, five hundred times over if he had said it once, that Christian George King would stay with the So-Jeers, and take care of the booffer ladies and the booffer childs—booffer being that native's expression for beautiful. He was now asked a few questions concerning the putting off of the boats, and in particular whether there was any way of embarking at the back of the Island: which Captain Carton would have half liked to do, and then have dropped round in its shadow and slanted across to the main. But, "No," says Christian George King. "No, no, no! Told you so, ten time. No, no, no! All reef, all rock, all swim, all drown!" Striking out as he said it, like a swimmer gone mad, and turning over on his back on dry land, and spluttering himself to death, in a manner that made him quite an exhibition.

The sun went down, after appearing to be a long time about it, and the assembly was called. Every man answered to his name, of course, and was at his post. It was not yet black dark, and the roll was only just gone through, when up comes Mr. Commissioner Pordage with his Diplomatic coat on.

"Captain Carton," says he, "Sir, what is this?"

"This, Mr. Commissioner" (he was very short with him), "is an expedition against the Pirates. It is a secret expedition, so please to keep it a secret."

"Sir," says Commissioner Pordage, "I trust there is going to be no unnecessary cruelty committed?"

"Sir," returns the officer, "I trust not."

"That is not enough, sir," cries Commissioner Pordage, getting wroth. "Captain Carton, I give you notice. Government requires you to treat the enemy with great delicacy, consideration, clemency, and forbearance."

"Sir," says Captain Carton, "I am an English officer, commanding English men, and I hope I am not likely to disappoint the Government's just expectations. But, I presume you know that these villains under their black flag have despoiled our countrymen of their property, burnt their homes, barbarously murdered them and their little children, and worse than murdered their wives and daughters?"

"Perhaps I do, Captain Carton," answers Pordage, waving his hand, with dignity: "perhaps I do not. It is not customary, sir, for Government to commit itself."

"It matters very little, Mr. Pordage, whether or no. Believing that I hold my commission by the allowance of God, and not that I have received it direct from the Devil, I shall certainly use it, with all avoidance of unnecessary suffering and with all merciful swiftness of execution, to exterminate these people from the face of the earth. Let me recommend you to go home, sir, and to keep out of the night air.

Never another syllable did that officer say to the Commissioner, but turned away to his men. The Commissioner buttoned his Diplomatic coat to the chin, said, "Mr. Kitten, attend me!" gasped, half choked himself, and took himself off."

It now fell very dark, indeed. I have seldom, if ever, seen it darker, nor yet so dark. The moon was not due until one in the morning, and it was but a little after nine when our men lay down where they were mustered. It was pretended that they were to take a nap, but everybody knew that no nap was to be got under the circumstances. Though all were very quiet, there was a restlessness among the people; much what I have seen among the people on a race-course, when the bell has rung for the saddling for a great race with large stakes on it.

At ten, they put off; only one boat putting off at a time; another following in five minutes; both then lying on their oars until another followed. Ahead of all, paddling his own outlandish little canoe without a sound, went the Sambo pilot, to take them safely outside the reef. No light was shown but once, and that was in the commanding officer's own hand. I lighted the dark lantern for him, and he took it from me when he embarked. They had blue lights and such like with them, but kept themselves as dark as murder.

The expedition got away with wonderful quietness, and Christian George King soon came back dancing with joy.

"Yup, So-Jeer," says he to myself in a very objectionable kind of convulsions, "Christian George King sar berry glad. Pirates all be blown a-pieces. Yup! Yup!"

My reply to that cannibal was, "However glad you may be, hold your noise, and don't dance jigs and slap your knees about it, for I can't abear to see you do it."

I was on duty then; we twelve who were left being divided into four watches of three each, three hours' spell. I was relieved at twelve. A little before that time, I had challenged, and Miss Maryon and Mrs. Belltott had come in.

"Good Davis," says Miss Maryon, "what is the matter? Where is my brother?"

I told her what was the matter, and where her brother was.

"O Heaven help him!" says she, clasping her hands and looking up—she was close in front of me, and she looked most lovely to be sure; "he is not sufficiently recovered, not strong enough for such strife!"

"If you had seen him, miss," I told her, "as I saw him when he volunteered, you would have known that his spirit is strong enough for any strife. It will bear his body, miss, to wherever duty calls him. It will always bear him to an honourable life, or a brave death."

"Heaven bless you!" says she, touching my arm. "I know it. Heaven bless you!"

Mrs. Belltott surprised me by trembling and saying nothing. They were still standing looking towards the sea and listening, after the relief had come round. It continuing very dark, I asked to be allowed to take them back. Miss Maryon thanked me, and she put her arm in mine, and I did take them back. I have now got to make a confession that will appear singular. After I had left them, I laid myself down on my face on the beach, and cried for the first time since I had frightened birds as a boy at Snorridge Bottom, to think what a poor, ignorant, low-placed, private soldier I was.

It was only for half a minute or so. A man can't at all times be quite master of himself, and it was only for half a minute or so. Then I up and went to my hut, and turned into my hammock, and fell asleep with wet eyelashes, and a sore, sore heart. Just as I had often done when I was a child, and had been worse used than usual.

I slept (as a child under those circumstances might) very sound, and yet very sore at heart all through my sleep. I was awoke by the words, "He is a determined man." I had sprung out of my hammock, and had seized my firelock, and was standing on the ground, saying the words myself. "He is a determined man." But, the curiosity of my state was, that I seemed to be repeating them after somebody, and to have been wonderfully startled by hearing them.

As soon as I came to myself, I went out of the hut, and away to where the guard was. Charker challenged:

"Who goes there?"

"A friend."

"Not Gill?" says he, as he shouldered his piece.

"Gill," says I.

"Why, what the deuce do you do out of your hammock?" says he.

"Too hot for sleep," says I; "is all right?"

"Right!" says Charker, "yes, yes; all's right enough here; what should be wrong here? It's the boats that we want to know of. Except for fire-flies twinkling about, and the lonesome splashes of great creatures as they drop into the water, there's nothing going on here to ease a man's mind from the boats."

The moon was above the sea, and had risen, I should say, some half an hour. As Charker spoke, with his face towards the sea, I, looking landward, suddenly laid my right hand on his breast, and said, "Don't move. Don't turn. Don't raise your voice! You never saw a Maltese face here?"

"No. What do you mean?" he asks, staring at me.

"Nor yet an English face, with one eye and a patch across the nose?"

"No. What ails you? What do you mean?"

I had seen both, looking at us round the stem of a cocoa-nut tree, where the moon struck them. I had seen that Sambo Pilot, with one hand laid on the stem of the tree, drawing them back into the heavy shadow. I had seen their naked cutlasses twinkle and shine, like bits of the moonshine in the water that had got blown ashore among the trees by the light wind. I had seen it all, in a moment. And I saw in a moment (as any man would), that the signalled move of the pirates on the mainland was a plot and feint; that the leak had been made to disable the sloop; that the boats had been tempted away, to leave the Island unprotected; and the pirates had landed by some secreted way at the back; and that Christian George King was a double-dyed traitor, and a most infernal villain.

I considered, still all in one and the same moment, that Charker was a brave man, but not quick with his head; and that Sergeant Drooce, with a much better head, was close by. All I said to Charker was, "I am afraid we are betrayed. Turn your back full to the moonlight on the sea, and cover the stem of the cocoa-nut tree which will then be right before you, at the height of a man's heart. Are you right?"

"I am right," says Charker, turning instantly, and falling into the position with a nerve of iron; "and right ain't left. Is it, Gill?"

A few seconds brought me to Sergeant Drooce's hut. He was fast asleep, and being a heavy sleeper, I had to lay my hand upon him to rouse him. The instant I touched him he came rolling out of his hammock, and upon me like a tiger. And a tiger he was, except that he knew what he was up to, in his utmost heat, as well as any man.

I had to struggle with him pretty hard to bring him to his senses, panting all the while (for he gave me a breather), "Sergeant, I am Gill Davis! Treachery! Pirates on the Island!"

The last words brought him round, and he took his hands off. "I have seen two of them within this minute," said I. And so I told him what I had told Harry Charker.

His soldierly, though tyrannical, head was clear in an instant. He didn't waste one word, even of surprise. "Order the guard," says he, "to draw off quietly into the Fort." (They called the enclosure I have before mentioned, the Fort, though it was not much of that.) "Then get you to the Fort as quick as you can, rouse up every soul there, and fasten the gate. I will bring in all those who are up at the Signal Hill. If we are surrounded before we can join you, you must make a sally and cut us out if you can. The word among our men is, 'Women and children!'"

He burst away, like fire going before the wind over dry reeds. He roused up the seven men who were off duty, and had them bursting away with him, before they knew they were not asleep. I reported orders to Charker, and ran to the Fort, as I have never run at any other time in all my life: no, not even in a dream.

The gate was not fast, and had no good fastening: only a double wooden bar, a poor chain, and a bad lock. Those, I secured as well as they could be secured in a few seconds by one pair of hands, and so ran to that part of the building where Miss Maryon lived. I called to her loudly by her name until she answered. I then called loudly all the names I knew—Mrs. Macey (Miss Maryon's married sister), Mr. Macey, Mrs. Venning, Mr. and Mrs. Fisher, even Mr. and Mrs. Pordage. Then I called out, "All you gentlemen here, get up and defend the place! We are caught in a trap. Pirates have landed. We are attacked!"

At the terrible word "Pirates!"—for, those villains had done such deeds in those seas as never can be told in writing, and can scarcely be so much as thought of—cries and screams rose up from every part of the place. Quickly lights moved about from window to window, and the cries moved about with them, and men, women, and children came flying down into the square. I remarked to myself, even then, what a number of things I seemed to see at once. I noticed Mrs. Macey coming towards me, carrying all her three children together. I noticed Mr. Pordage in the greatest terror, in vain trying to get on his Diplomatic coat; and Mr. Kitten respectfully tying his pocket-handkerchief over Mrs. Pordage's nightcap. I noticed Mrs. Belltott run out screaming, and shrink upon the ground near me, and cover her face in her hands, and lie all of a bundle, shivering. But, what I noticed with the greatest pleasure was, the determined eyes with which those men of the Mine that I had thought fine gentlemen, came round me with what arms they had: to the full as cool and resolute as I could be, for my life—ay, and for my soul, too, into the bargain!

The chief person being Mr. Macey, I told him how the three men of the guard would be at the gate directly, if they were not already there, and how Sergeant Drooce and the other seven were gone to bring in the outlying part of the people of Silver-Store. I next urged him, for the love of all who were dear to him, to trust no Sambo, and, above all, if he could get any good chance at Christian George King, not to lose it, but to put him out of the world.

"I will follow your advice to the letter, Davis," says he; "what next?"

My answer was, "I think, sir, I would recommend you next, to order down such heavy furniture and lumber as can be moved, and make a barricade within the gate."

"That's good again," says he: "will you see it done?"

"I'll willingly help to do it," says I, "unless or until my superior, Sergeant Drooce, gives me other orders."

He shook me by the hand, and having told off some of his companions to help me, bestirred himself to look to the arms and ammunition. A proper quick, brave, steady, ready gentleman!

One of their three little children was deaf and dumb. Miss Maryon had been from the first with all the children, soothing them, and dressing them (poor little things, they had been brought out of their beds), and making them believe that it was a game of play, so that some of them were now even laughing. I had been working hard with the others at the barricade, and had got up a pretty good breastwork within the gate. Drooce and the seven had come back, bringing in the people from the Signal Hill, and had worked along with us: but, I had not so much as spoken a word to Drooce, nor had Drooce so much as spoken a word to me, for we were both too busy. The breastwork was now finished, and I found Miss Maryon at my side, with a child in her arms. Her dark hair was fastened round her head with a band. She had a quantity of it, and it looked even richer and more precious, put up hastily out of her way, than I had seen it look when it was carefully arranged. She was very pale, but extraordinarily quiet and still.

"Dear good Davis," said she, "I have been waiting to speak one word to you."

I turned to her directly. If I had received a musket-ball in the heart, and she had stood there, I almost believe I should have turned to her before I dropped.

"This pretty little creature," said she, kissing the child in her arms, who was playing with her hair and trying to pull it down, "cannot hear what we say—can hear nothing. I trust you so much, and have such great confidence in you, that I want you to make me a promise."

"What is it, Miss?"

"That if we are defeated, and you are absolutely sure of my being taken, you will kill me."

"I shall not be alive to do it, Miss. I shall have died in your defence before it comes to that. They must step across my body to lay a hand on you."

"But, if you are alive, you brave soldier." How she looked at me! "And if you cannot save me from the Pirates, living, you will save me, dead. Tell me so."

Well! I told her I would do that at the last, if all else failed. She took my hand—my rough, coarse hand—and put it to her lips. She put it to the child's lips, and the child kissed it. I believe I had the strength of half a dozen men in me, from that moment, until the fight was over.

All this time, Mr. Commissioner Pordage had been wanting to make a Proclamation to the Pirates to lay down their arms and go away; and everybody had been hustling him about and tumbling over him, while he was calling for pen and ink to write it with. Mrs. Pordage, too, had some curious ideas about the British respectability of her nightcap (which had as many frills to it, growing in layers one inside another, as if it was a white vegetable of the artichoke sort), and she wouldn't take the nightcap off, and would be angry when it got crushed by the other ladies who were handing things about, and, in short, she gave as much trouble as her husband did. But, as we were now forming for the defence of the place, they were both poked out of the way with no ceremony. The children and ladies were got into the little trench which surrounded the silver-house (we were afraid of leaving them in any of the light buildings, lest they should be set on fire), and we made the best disposition we could. There was a pretty good store, in point of amount, of tolerable swords and cutlasses. Those were issued. There were, also, perhaps, a score or so of spare muskets. Those were brought out. To my astonishment, little Mrs. Fisher, that I had taken for a doll and a baby, was not only very active in that service, but volunteered to load the spare arms.

"For, I understand it well," says she, cheerfully, without a shake in her voice.

"I am a soldier's daughter and a sailor's sister, and I understand it, too," says Miss Maryon, just in the same way.

Steady and busy behind where I stood, those two beautiful and delicate young women fell to handling the guns, hammering the flints, looking to the locks, and quietly directing others to pass up powder and bullets from hand to hand, as unflinching as the best of tried soldiers.

Sergeant Drooce had brought in word that the pirates were very strong in numbers—over a hundred was his estimate—and that they were not, even then, all landed; for, he had seen them in a very good position on the further side of the Signal Hill, evidently waiting for the rest of their men to come up. In the present pause, the first we had had since the alarm, he was telling this over again to Mr. Macey, when Mr. Macey suddenly cried out: "The signal! Nobody has thought of the signal!"

We knew of no signal, so we could not have thought of it.

"What signal may you mean, sir?" says Sergeant Drooce, looking sharp at him.

"There is a pile of wood upon the Signal Hill. If it could be lighted—which never has been done yet—it would be a signal of distress to the mainland."

Charker cries, directly: "Sergeant Drooce, dispatch me on that duty. Give me the two men who were on guard with me to-night, and I'll light the fire, if it can be done."

"And if it can't, Corporal ——" Mr. Macey strikes in.

"Look at these ladies and children, sir!" says Charker. "I'd sooner *light myself*, than not try any chance to save them."

We gave him a Hurrah!—it burst from us, come of it what might—and he got his two men, and was let out at the gate, and crept away. I had no sooner come back to my place from being one of the party to handle the gate, than Miss Maryon said in a low voice behind me:

"Davis, will you look at this powder? This is not right."

I turned my head. Christian George King

again, and treachery again! Sea-water had been conveyed into the magazine, and every grain of powder was spoiled!

"Stay a moment," said Sergeant Drooce, when I had told him, without causing a movement in a muscle of his face: "look to your pouch, my lad. You Tom Packer, look to your pouch, confound you! Look to your pouches, all you Marines."

The same artful savage had got at them, somehow or another, and the cartridges were all unserviceable. "Hum!" says the Sergeant. "Look to your loading, men. You are right so far?"

Yes; we were right so far.

"Well, my lads, and gentlemen all," says the Sergeant, "this will be a hand-to-hand affair, and so much the better."

He treated himself to a pinch of snuff, and stood up, square-shouldered and broad-chested, in the light of the moon—which was now very bright—as cool as if he was waiting for a play to begin. He stood quiet, and we all stood quiet, for a matter of something like half-an-hour. I took notice from such whispered talk as there was, how little we, that the silver did not belong to, thought about it, and how much the people that it did belong to, thought about it. At the end of the half-hour, it was reported from the gate that Charker and the two were falling back on us, pursued by about a dozen.

"Sally! Gate-party, under Gill Davis," says the Sergeant, "and bring 'em in! Like men, now!"

We were not long about it, and we brought them in. "Don't take me," says Charker, holding me round the neck, and stumbling down at my feet when the gate was fast, "don't take me near the ladies or the children, Gill. They had better not see Death, till it can't be helped. They'll see it soon enough."

"Harry!" I answered, holding up his head. "Comrade!"

He was cut to pieces. The signal had been secured by the first pirate party that landed; his hair was all singed off, and his face was blackened with the running pitch from a torch.

He made no complaint of pain, or of anything. "Good-bye, old chap," was all he said, with a smile. "I've got my death. And Death ain't life. Is it, Gill?"

Having helped to lay his poor body on one side, I went back to my post. Sergeant Drooce looked at me, with his eyebrows a little lifted. I nodded. "Close up here men, and gentlemen all!" said the Sergeant. "A place too many in the line."

The Pirates were so close upon us at this time, that the foremost of them were already before the gate. More and more came up with a great noise, and shouting loudly. When we believed from the sound that they were all there, we gave three English cheers. The poor little children joined, and were so fully convinced of our being at play, that they enjoyed the noise, and were heard clapping their hands in the silence that followed.

Our disposition was this, beginning with the rear. Mrs. Venning, holding her daughter's child in her arms, sat on the steps of the little square trench surrounding the silver-house, encouraging and directing those women and children as she might have done in the happiest and easiest time of her life. Then, there was an armed line, under Mr. Macey, across the width of the enclosure, facing that way and having their backs towards the gate, in order that they might watch the walls and prevent our being taken by surprise. Then there was a space of eight or ten feet deep, in which the spare arms were, and in which Miss Maryon and Mrs. Fisher, their hands and dresses blackened with the spoilt gunpowder, worked on their knees, tying such things as knives, old bayonets, and spearheads, to the muzzles of the useless muskets. Then, there was a second armed line, under Sergeant Drooce, also across the width of the enclosure, but facing to the gate. Then came the breastwork we had made, with a zig-zag way through it for me and my little party to hold good in retreating, as long as we could, when we were driven from the gate. We all knew that it was impossible to hold the place long, and that our only hope was in the timely discovery of the plot by the boats, and in their coming back.

I and my men were now thrown forward to the gate. From a spy-hole, I could see the whole crowd of Pirates. There were Malays among them, Dutch, Maltese, Greeks, Sambos, Negroes, and Convict Englishmen from the West India Islands; among the last, him with the one eye and the patch across the nose. There were some Portuguese, too, and a few Spaniards. The captain was a Portuguese; a little man with very large ear-rings under a very broad hat, and a great bright shawl twisted about his shoulders. They were all strongly armed, but like a boarding party, with pikes, swords, cutlasses, and axes. I noticed a good many pistols, but not a gun of any kind among them. This gave me to understand that they had considered that a continued roll of musketry might perhaps have been heard on the mainland; also, that for the reason that fire would be seen from the mainland they would not set the Fort in flames and roast us alive; which was one of their favourite ways of carrying on. I looked about for Christian George King, and if I had seen him I am much mistaken if he would not have received my one round of ball-cartridge in his head. But, no Christian George King was visible.

A sort of a wild Portuguese demon, who seemed either fierce-mad or fierce-drunk—but, they all seemed one or the other—came forward with the black flag, and gave it a wave or two. After that, the Portuguese captain called out in shrill English, "I say you! English fools! Open the gate! Surrender!"

As we kept close and quiet, he said something to his men which I didn't understand, and when he had said it, the one-eyed English rascal with the patch (who had stepped out when he began), said it again in English. It was only this. "Boys of the black flag, this is to be quickly done. Take all the prisoners you can. If they don't yield, kill the children to make them. Forward!" Then, they all came on at the gate, and, in another half minute were smashing and splitting it in.

We struck at them through the gaps and shivers, and we dropped many of them, too; but, their very weight would have carried such a gate, if they had been unarmed. I soon found Sergeant Drooce at my side, forming us six remaining marines in line—Tom Packer next to me—and ordering us to fall back three paces, and, as they broke in, to give them our one little volley at short distance. "Then," says he, "receive them behind your breastwork on the bayonet, and at least let every man of you pin one of the cursed cockchafers through the body."

We checked them by our fire, slight as it was, and we checked them at the breastwork. However, they broke over it like swarms of devils—they were, really and truly, more devils than men—and then it was hand to hand, indeed.

We clubbed our muskets and laid about us; even then, those two ladies—always behind me—were steady and ready with the arms. I had a lot of Maltese and Malays upon me, and, but for a broadsword that Miss Maryon's own hand put in mine, should have got my end from them. But, was that all? No. I saw a heap of banded dark hair and a white dress come thrice between me and them, under my own raised right arm, which each time might have destroyed the wearer of the white dress; and each time one of the lot went down, struck dead.

Drooce was armed with a broadsword, too, and did such things with it, that there was a cry, in half-a-dozen languages, of "Kill that sergeant!" as I knew, by the cry being raised in English, and taken up in other tongues. I had received a severe cut across the left arm a few moments before, and should have known nothing of it, except supposing that somebody had struck me a smart blow, if I had not felt weak, and seen myself covered with spouting blood, and, at the same instant of time, seen Miss Maryon tearing her dress and binding it with Mrs. Fisher's help round the wound. They called to Tom Packer, who was scouring by, to stop and guard me for one minute, while I was bound, or I should bleed to death in trying to defend myself. Tom stopped directly, with a good sabre in his hand.

In that same moment—all things seem to happen in that same moment, at such a time—half-a-dozen had rushed howling at Sergeant Drooce. The Sergeant, stepping back against the wall, stopped one howl for ever with such a terrible blow, and waited for the rest to come on, with such a wonderfully unmoved face, that they stopped and looked at him.

"See him now!' cried Tom Packer. "Now, when I could cut him out! Gill! Did I tell you to mark my words?'

I implored Tom Packer in the Lord's name, as well as I could in my faintness, to go to the Sergeant's aid.

"I hate and detest him," says Tom, moodily wavering. "Still, he is a brave man." Then he calls out, "Sergeant Drooce, Sergeant Drooce! Tell me you have driven me too hard, and are sorry for it."

The Sergeant, without turning his eyes from his assailants, which would have been instant death to him, answers:

"No. I won't."

"Sergeant Drooce!" cried Tom, in a kind of an agony. "I have passed my word that I would never save you from Death, if I could, but would leave you to die. Tell me you have driven me too hard and are sorry for it, and that shall go for nothing."

One of the group laid the Sergeant's bald bare head open. The Sergeant laid him dead.

"I tell you," says the Sergeant, breathing a little short, and waiting for the next attack, "no. I won't. If you are not man enough to strike for a fellow-soldier because he wants help, and because of nothing else, I'll go into the other world and look for a better man."

Tom swept upon them, and cut him out. Tom and he fought their way through another knot of them, and sent them flying, and came over to where I was beginning again to feel, with inexpressible joy, that I had got a sword in my hand.

They had hardly come to us, when I heard, above all the other noises, a tremendous cry of women's voices. I also saw Miss Maryon, with quite a new face, suddenly clap her two hands over Mrs. Fisher's eyes. I looked towards the silver-house, and saw Mrs. Venning—standing upright on the top of the steps of the trench, with her gray hair and her dark eyes—hide her daughter's child behind her, among the folds of her dress, strike a pirate with her other hand, and fall, shot by his pistol.

The cry rose again, and there was a terrible and confusing rush of the women into the midst of the struggle. In another moment, something came tumbling down upon me that I thought was the wall. It was a heap of Sambos who had come over the wall; and of four men who clung to my legs like serpents, one who clung to my right leg was Christian George King.

"Yup, So-Jeer," says he, "Christian George King sar berry glad So-Jeer a prisoner. Christian George King been waiting for So-Jeer sech long time. Yup, yup!"

What could I do, with five-and-twenty of them on me, but be tied hand and foot? So, I was tied hand and foot. It was all over now—boats not come back—all lost! When I was fast bound and was put up against the wall, the one-eyed English convict came up with the Portuguese Captain, to have a look at me.

"See!" says he. "Here's the determined man! If you had slept sounder, last night, you'd have slept your soundest last night, my determined man."

The Portuguese Captain laughed in a cool way, and with the flat of his cutlass, hit me crosswise, as if I was the bough of a tree that he played with: first on the face, and then across the chest and the wounded arm. I looked him steady in the face without tumbling while he looked at me, I am happy to say; but, when they went away, I fell, and lay there.

The sun was up, when I was roused and told to come down to the beach and be embarked. I was full of aches and pains, and could not at first remember; but, I remembered quite soon enough. The killed were lying about all over the place, and the Pirates were burying their dead, and taking away their wounded on hastily-made litters, to the back of the Island. As for us prisoners, some of their boats had come round to the usual harbour, to carry us off. We looked a wretched few, I thought, when I got down there; still, it was another sign that we had fought well, and made the enemy suffer.

The Portuguese Captain had all the women already embarked in the boat he himself commanded, which was just putting off when I got down. Miss Maryon sat on one side of him, and gave me a moment's look, as full of quiet courage, and pity, and confidence, as if it had been an hour long. On the other side of him was poor little Mrs. Fisher, weeping for her child and her mother. I was shoved into the same boat with Drooce and Packer, and the remainder of our party of marines: of whom we had lost two privates, besides Charker, my poor, brave comrade. We all made a melancholy passage, under the hot sun over to the mainland. There, we landed in a solitary place, and were mustered on the sea sand. Mr. and Mrs. Macey and their children were amongst us, Mr. and Mrs. Pordage, Mr. Kitten, Mr. Fisher, and Mrs. Belltott. We mustered only fourteen men, fifteen women, and seven children. Those were all that remained of the English who had lain down to sleep last night, unsuspecting and happy, on the Island of Silver-Store.

(*To be continued*)

* * *

I MEAN the diseased refinement and moralization, thanks to which the "animal man" has at last learnt to be ashamed of his instincts. On the road to angelhood (not to use in this context a harder word) man has developed that dyspeptic stomach and coated tongue, which have made not only the joy and innocence of the animal repulsive to him, but also life itself:—so that sometimes he stands with stopped nostrils before his own self, and, like Pope Innocent the Third, makes a black list of his own horrors.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE.

The House of Mapuhi

By JACK LONDON

Jack London

DESPITE the heavy clumsiness of her lines, the *Aorai* handled easily in the light breeze, and her captain ran her well in before he hove to just outside the suck of the surf. The atoll of Hikueru lay low on the water, a circle of pounded coral sand a hundred yards wide, twenty miles in circumference, and from three to five feet above high-water mark. On the bottom of the huge and glassy lagoon was much pearl shell, and from the deck of the schooner, across the slender ring of the atoll, the divers could be seen at work. But the lagoon had no entrance for even a trading schooner. With a favoring breeze cutters could win in through the tortuous and shallow channel, but the schooners lay off and on outside and sent in their small boats.

The *Aorai* swung out a boat smartly, into which sprang half a dozen brown-skinned sailors clad only in scarlet loin-cloths. They took the oars, while in the stern-sheets, at the steering sweep, stood a young man garbed in the tropic white that marks the European. But he was not all European. The golden strain of Polynesia betrayed itself in the sun-gilt of his fair skin and cast up golden sheens and lights through the glimmering blue of his eyes. Raoul he was, Alexandré Raoul, youngest son of Marie Raoul, the wealthy quarter-caste, who owned and managed half a dozen trading schooners similar to the *Aorai*. Across an eddy just outside the entrance, and in and through and over a boiling tide-rip, the boat fought its way to the mirrored calm of the lagoon. Young Raoul leaped out upon the white sand and shook hands with a tall native. The man's chest and shoulders were magnificent, but the stump of a right arm, beyond the flesh of which the age-whitened bone projected several inches, attested the encounter with a shark that had put an end to his diving days and made him a fawner and an intriguer for small favors.

"Have you heard, Alec?" were his first words. "Mapuhi has found a pearl—such a pearl. Never was there one like it ever fished up in Hikueru, nor in all the Paumotus, nor in all the world. Buy it from him. He has it now. And remember that I told you first. He is a fool and you can get it cheap. Have you any tobacco?"

Straight up the beach to a shack under a pandanus-tree Raoul headed. He was his mother's supercargo, and his business was to comb all the Paumotus for the wealth of copra, shell, and pearls that they yielded up.

He was a young supercargo, it was his second voyage in such capacity, and he suffered much secret worry from his lack of experience in pricing pearls. But when Mapuhi exposed the pearl to his sight he managed to suppress the start it gave him, and to maintain a careless, commercial expression on his face. For the pearl had struck him a blow. It was large as a pigeon egg, a perfect sphere, of a whiteness that reflected opalescent lights from all colours about it. It was alive. Never had he seen anything like it. When Mapuhi dropped it into his hand he was surprised by the weight of it. That showed that it was a good pearl. He examined it closely through a pocket magnifying-glass. It was without flaw or blemish. The purity of it seemed almost to melt into the atmosphere out of his hand. In the shade it was softly luminous, gleaming like a tender moon. So translucently white was it, that when he dropped it into a glass of water he had difficulty in finding it. So straight and swiftly had it sunk to the bottom that he knew its weight was excellent.

"Well, what do you want for it?" he asked, with a fine assumption of nonchalance.

"I want—" Mapuhi began, and behind him, framing his own dark face, the dark faces of two women and a girl nodded concurrence in what he wanted. Their heads were bent forward, they were animated by a suppressed eagerness, their eyes flashed avariciously.

"I want a house," Mapuhi went on. "It must have a roof of galvanized iron and an octagon-drop-clock. It must be six fathoms long with a porch all around. A big room must be in the centre, with a round table in the middle of it and the octagon-drop-clock on the wall. There must be four bedrooms, two on each side of the big room, and in each bedroom must be an iron bed, two chairs, and a washstand. And back of the house must be a kitchen, a good kitchen, with pots and pans and a stove. And you must build the house on my island, which is Fakarava."

"Is that all?" Raoul asked incredulously.

"There must be a sewing-machine," spoke up Tefara, Mapuhi's wife.

"Not forgetting the octagon-drop-clock," added Nauri, Mapuhi's mother.

"Yes, that is all," said Mapuhi.

Young Raoul laughed. He laughed long and heartily. But while he laughed he secretly performed problems in mental arithmetic. He had never built a house in his life, and his notions concerning house building were hazy. While he laughed, he calculated the cost of the voyage to Tahiti for materials, of the materials themselves, of the voyage back again to Fakarava, and the cost of landing the materials and of building the house. It would come to four thousand French dollars, allowing a margin for safety—four thousand French dollars were equivalent to twenty thousand francs. It was impossible. How was he to know the value of such a pearl? Twenty thousand francs was a lot of money—and of his mother's money at that.

"Mapuhi," he said, "you are a big fool. Set a money price."

But Mapuhi shook his head, and the three heads behind him shook with his.

"I want the house," he said. "It must be six fathoms long with a porch all around—"

"Yes, yes," Raoul interrupted. "I know all about your house, but it won't do. I'll give you a thousand Chili dollars."

The four heads chorused a silent negative.

"And a hundred Chili dollars in trade."

"I want the house," Mapuhi began.

"What good will the house do you?" Raoul demanded. "The first hurricane that comes along will wash it away. You ought to know. Captain Raffy says it looks like a hurricane right now."

"Not on Fakarava," said Mapuhi. "The land is much higher there. On this island, yes. Any hurricane can sweep Hikueru. I will have the house on Fakarava. It must be six fathoms long with a porch all around——"

And Raoul listened again to the tale of the house. Several hours he spent in the endeavor to hammer the house-obsession out of Mapuhi's mind; but Mapuhi's mother and wife, and Ngakura, Mapuhi's daughter, bolstered him in his resolve for the house. Through the open doorway, while he listened for the twentieth time to the detailed description of the house that was wanted, Raoul saw his schooner's second boat draw up on the beach. The sailors rested on the oars, advertising haste to be gone. The first mate of the *Aorai* sprang ashore, exchanged a word with the one-armed native, then hurried toward Raoul. The day grew suddenly dark, as a squall obscured the face of the sun. Across the lagoon Raoul could see approaching the ominous line of the puff of wind.

"Captain Raffy says you've got to get to hell outa here," was the mate's greeting. "If there's any shell, we've got to run the risk of picking it up later on—so he says. The barometer's dropped to twenty-nine-seventy."

The gust of wind struck the pandanus-tree overhead and tore through the palms beyond, flinging half a dozen ripe cocoanuts with heavy thuds to the ground. Then came the rain out of the distance, advancing with the roar of a gale of wind and causing the water of the lagoon to smoke in driven windrows. The sharp rattle of the first drops was on the leaves when Raoul sprang to his feet.

"A thousand Chili dollars, cash down, Mapuhi," he said. "And two hundred Chili dollars in trade."

"I want a house—" the other began.

"Mapuhi!" Raoul yelled, in order to make himself heard. "You are a fool!"

He flung out of the house, and, side by side with the mate, fought his way down the beach toward the boat. They could not see the boat. The tropic rain sheeted about them so that they could see only the beach under their feet and the spiteful little waves from the lagoon that snapped and bit at the sand. A figure appeared through the deluge. It was Huru-Huru, the man with the one arm.

"Did you get the pearl?" he yelled in Raoul's ear.

"Mapuhi is a fool!" was the answering yell, and the next moment they were lost to each other in the descending water.

Half an hour later, Huru-Huru, watching from the seaward side of the atoll, saw the two boats hoisted in and the *Aorai* pointing her nose out to sea. And near her, just come in from the sea on the wings of the squall, he saw another schooner hove to and dropping a boat into the water. He knew her. It was the *Orohena*, owned by Toriki, the half-caste trader, who served as his own supercargo and who doubtlessly was even then in the stern-sheets of the boat. Huru-Huru chuckled. He knew that Mapuhi owed Toriki for trade-goods advanced the year before.

The squall had passed. The hot sun was blazing down, and the lagoon was once more a mirror. But the air was sticky like mucilage, and the weight of it seemed to burden the lungs and make breathing difficult.

"Have you heard the news, Toriki?" Huru-Huru asked. "Mapuhi has found a pearl. Never was there a pearl like it ever fished up in Hikueru, nor anywhere in the Paumotus, nor anywhere in all the world. Mapuhi is a fool. Besides, he owes you money. Remember that I told you first. Have you any tobacco?"

And to the grass-shack of Mapuhi went Toriki. He was a masterful man, withal a fairly stupid one. Carelessly he glanced at the wonderful pearl—glanced for a moment only; and carelessly he dropped it into his pocket.

"You are lucky," he said. "It is a nice pearl. I will give you credit on the books."

"I want a house," Mapuhi began, in consternation. "It must be six fathoms——"

"Six fathoms your grandmother!" was the trader's retort. "You want to pay up your debts, that's what you want. You owed me twelve hundred dollars Chili. Very well; you owe them no longer. The amount is squared. Besides, I will give you credit for two hundred Chili. If, when I get to Tahiti, the pearl sells well, I will give you credit for another hundred—that will make three hundred. But mind, only if the pearl sells well. I may even lose money on it."

Mapuhi folded his arms in sorrow and sat with bowed head. He had been robbed of his pearl. In place of the house, he had paid a debt. There was nothing to show for the pearl.

"You are a fool," said Tefara.

"You are a fool," said Nauri, his mother. "Why did you let the pearl into his hand?"

"What was I to do?" Mapuhi protested. "I owed him the money. He knew I had the pearl. You heard him yourself ask to see it. I had not told him. He knew. Somebody else told him. And I owed him the money."

"Mapuhi is a fool," mimicked Ngakura. She was twelve years old and did not know any better. Mapuhi relieved his feelings by sending her reeling from a box on the ear; while Tefara and Nauri burst into tears and continued to upbraid him after the manner of women.

Huru-Huru, watching on the beach, saw a third schooner that he knew heave to outside the entrance and drop a boat. It was the *Hira*, well named, for she was owned by Levy, the German Jew, the greatest pearl-buyer of them all, and, as was well known, Hira was the Tahitian god of fishermen and thieves.

"Have you heard the news?" Huru-Huru asked, as Levy, a fat man with massive asymmetrical features, stepped out upon the beach. "Mapuhi has found a pearl. There was never a pearl like it in Hikueru, in all the Paumotus, in all the world. Mapuhi is a fool. He has sold it to Toriki for fourteen hundred Chili—I listened outside and heard. Toriki is likewise a fool. You can buy it from him cheap. Remember that I told you first. Have you any tobacco?"

"Where is Toriki?"

"In the house of Captain Lynch, drinking absinthe. He has been there an hour."

And while Levy and Toriki drank absinthe and chaffed over the pearl, Huru-Huru listened and heard the stupendous price of twenty-five thousand francs agreed upon.

It was at this time that both the *Orohena* and the *Hira*, running in close to the shore, began firing guns and signalling frantically.

The three men stepped outside in time to see the two schooners go hastily about and head off shore, dropping mainsails and flying-jibs on the run in the teeth of the squall that heeled them far over on the whitened water. Then the rain blotted them out.

"They'll be back after it's over," said Toriki. "We'd better be getting out of here."

"I reckon the glass has fallen some more," said Captain Lynch.

He was a white-bearded sea-captain, too old for service, who had learned that the only way to live on comfortable terms with his asthma was on Hikueru. He went inside to look at the barometer.

"Great God!" they heard him exclaim, and rushed in to join him at staring at a dial, which marked twenty-nine-twenty.

Again they came out, this time anxiously to consult sea and sky. The squall had cleared away, but the sky remained overcast. The two schooners, under all sail and joined by a third, could be seen making back. A veer in the wind induced them to slack off sheets, and five minutes afterward a sudden veer from the opposite quarter caught all three schooners aback, and those on shore could see the boomtackles being slacked away or cast off on the jump. The sound of the surf was loud, hollow, and menacing, and a heavy swell was setting in. A terrible sheet of lightning burst before their eyes, illuminating the dark day, and the thunder rolled wildly about them.

Toriki and Levy broke into a run for their boats, the latter ambling along like a panic-stricken hippopotamus. As their two boats swept out the entrance, they passed the boat of the *Aorai* coming in. In the stern-sheets, encouraging the rowers, was Raoul. Unable to shake the vision of the pearl from his mind, he was returning to accept Mapuhi's price of a house.

He landed on the beach in the midst of a driving thunder squall that was so dense that he collided with Huru-Huru before he saw him.

"Too late," yelled Huru-Huru. "Mapuhi sold it to Toriki for fourteen hundred Chili, and Toriki sold it to Levy for twenty-five thousand francs. And Levy will sell it in France for a hundred thousand francs. Have you any tobacco?"

Raoul felt relieved. His troubles about the pearl were over. He need not worry any more, even if he had not got the pearl. But he did not believe Huru-Huru. Mapuhi might well have sold it for fourteen hundred Chili, but that Levy, who knew pearls, should have paid twenty-five thousand francs was too wide a stretch. Raoul decided to interview Captain Lynch on the subject, but when he arrived at that ancient mariner's house, he found him looking wide-eyed at the barometer.

"What do you read it?" Captain Lynch asked anxiously, rubbing his spectacles and staring again at the instrument.

"Twenty-nine-ten," said Raoul. "I have never seen it so low before."

"I should say not!" snorted the captain. "Fifty years boy and man on all the seas, and I've never seen it go down to that. Listen!"

They stood for a moment, while the surf rumbled and shook the house. Then they went outside. The squall had passed. They could see the *Aorai* lying becalmed a mile away and pitching and tossing madly in the tremendous seas that rolled in stately procession down out of the northeast and flung themselves furiously upon the coral shore. One of the sailors from the boat pointed at the mouth of the passage and shook his head. Raoul looked and saw a white anarchy of foam and surge.

"I guess I'll stay with you to-night, Captain," he said; then turned to the sailor and told him to haul the boat out and to find shelter for himself and fellows.

"Twenty-nine flat," Captain Lynch reported, coming out from another look at the barometer, a chair in his hand.

He sat down and stared at the spectacle of the sea. The sun came out, increasing the sultriness of the day, while the dead calm still held. The seas continued to increase in magnitude.

"What makes that sea is what gets me," Raoul muttered petulantly. "There is no wind, yet look at it, look at that fellow there!"

Miles in length, carrying tens of thousands of tons in weight, its impact shook the frail atoll like an earthquake. Captain Lynch was startled.

"Gracious!" he exclaimed, half-rising from his chair, then sinking back.

"But there is no wind," Raoul persisted. "I could understand it if there was wind along with it."

"You'll get the wind soon enough without worryin' for it," was the grim reply.

The two men sat on in silence. The sweat stood out on their skin in myriads of tiny drops that ran together, forming blotches of moisture, which, in turn, coalesced into rivulets that dripped to the ground. They panted for breath, the old man's efforts being especially painful. A sea swept up the beach, licking around the trunks of the cocoanuts and subsiding almost at their feet.

"'Way past high-water mark," Captain Lynch remarked; "and I've been here eleven years." He looked at his watch. "It is three o'clock."

A man and woman, at their heels a motley following of brats and curs, trailed disconsolately by. They came to a halt beyond the house, and, after much irresolution, sat down in the sand. A few minutes later another family trailed in from the opposite direction, the men and women carrying a heterogeneous assortment of possessions. And soon several hundred persons of all ages and sexes were congregated about the captain's dwelling. He called to one new arrival, a woman with a nursing babe in her arms, and in answer received the information that her house had just been swept into the lagoon.

This was the highest spot of land in miles, and already, in many places on either hand, the great seas were making a clean breach of the slender ring of the atoll and surging into the lagoon. Twenty miles around stretched the ring of the atoll, and in no place was it more than fifty fathoms wide. It was the height of the diving season, and from all the islands around, even as far as Tahiti, the natives had gathered.

"There are twelve hundred men, women, and children here," said Captain Lynch. "I wonder how many will be here to-morrow morning."

"But why don't it blow?—that's what I want know," Raoul remanded.

"Don't worry, young man, don't worry; you'll get your troubles fast enough."

Even as Captain Lynch spoke, a great watery mass smote the atoll. The seawater churned about them three inches deep under their chairs. A low wail of fear went up from the many women. The children, with clasped hands, stared at the immense rollers and cried piteously. Chickens and cats, wading perturbedly in the water, as by common consent, with flight and scramble took refuge on the roof of the captain's house. A Paumotan, with a litter of new-born puppies in a basket, climbed into a cocoanut tree and twenty feet above the ground made the basket fast. The mother floundered about in the water beneath, whining and yelping.

And still the sun shone brightly and the dead calm continued. They sat and watched the seas and the insane pitching of the *Aorai*. Captain Lynch gazed at the huge mountains of water sweeping in until he could gaze no more. He covered his face with his hands to shut out the sight; then went into the house.

"Twenty-eight-sixty," he said quietly when he returned.

In his arm was a coil of small rope. He cut it into two-fathom lengths, giving one to Raoul and, retaining one for himself, distributed the remainder among the women with the advice to pick out a tree and climb.

A light air began to blow out of the northeast, and the fan of it on his cheek seemed to cheer Raoul up. He could see the *Aorai* trimming her sheets and heading off shore, and he regretted that he was not on her. She would get away at any rate, but as for the atoll— A sea breached across, almost sweeping him off his feet, and he selected a tree. Then he remembered the barometer and ran back to the house. He encountered Captain Lynch on the same errand and together they went in.

"Twenty-eight-twenty," said the old mariner. "It's going to be fair hell around here—what was that?"

The air seemed filled with the rush of something. The house quivered and vibrated, and they heard the thrumming of a mighty note of sound. The windows rattled. Two panes crashed; a draught of wind tore in, striking them and making them stagger. The door opposite banged shut, shattering the latch. The white doorknob crumbled in fragments to the floor. The room's walls bulged like a gas balloon in the process of sudden inflation. Then came a new sound like the rattle of musketry, as the spray from a sea struck the wall of the house. Captain Lynch looked at his watch. It was four o'clock. He put on a coat of pilot cloth, unhooked the barometer, and stowed it away in a capacious pocket. Again a sea struck the house, with a heavy thud, and the light building tilted, twisted quarter-around on its foundation, and sank down, its floor at an angle of ten degrees.

Raoul went out first. The wind caught him and whirled him away. He noted that it had hauled around to the east. With a great effort he threw himself on the sand, crouching and holding his own. Captain Lynch, driven like a wisp of straw, sprawled over him. Two of the *Aorai's* sailors, leaving a cocoanut tree to which they had been clinging, came to their aid, leaning against the wind at impossible angles and fighting and clawing every inch of the way.

The old man's joints were stiff and he could not climb, so the sailors, by means of short ends of rope tied together, hoisted him up the trunk, a few feet at a time, till they could make him fast, at the top of the tree, fifty feet from the ground. Raoul passed his length of rope around the base of an adjacent tree and stood looking on. The wind was frightful. He had never dreamed it could blow so hard. A sea breached across the atoll, wetting him to the knees ere it subsided into the lagoon. The sun had disappeared, and a lead-coloured twilight settled down. A few drops of rain, driving horizontally, struck him. The impact was like that of leaden pellets. A splash of salt spray struck his face. It was like the slap of a man's hand. His cheeks stung, and involuntary tears of pain were in his smarting eyes. Several hundred natives had taken to the trees, and he could have laughed at the bunches of human fruit clustering in the tops. Then, being Tahitian-born, he doubled his body at the waist, clasped the trunk of his tree with his hands, pressed the soles of his feet against the near surface of the trunk, and began to walk up the tree. At the top he found two women, two children, and a man. One little girl clasped a housecat in her arms.

From his eyrie he waved his hand to Captain Lynch, and that doughty patriarch waved back. Raoul was appalled at the sky. It had approached much nearer—in fact, it seemed just over his head; and it had turned from lead to black. Many people were still on the ground grouped about the bases of the trees and holding on. Several such clusters were praying, and in one the Mormon missionary was exhorting. A weird sound, rhythmical, faint as the faintest chirp of a far cricket, enduring but for a moment, but in that moment suggesting to him vaguely the thought of heaven and celestial music, came to his ear. He glanced about him and saw, at the base of another tree, a large cluster of people holding on by ropes and by one another. He could see their faces working and their lips moving in unison. No sound came to him, but he knew that they were singing hymns.

Still the wind continued to blow harder. By no conscious process could he measure it, for it had long since passed beyond all his experience of wind; but he knew somehow, nevertheless, that it was blowing harder. Not far away a tree was uprooted, flinging its load of human beings to the ground. A sea washed across the strip of sand, and they were gone. Things were happening quickly. He saw a brown shoulder and a black head silhouetted against the churning white of the lagoon. The next instant that, too, had vanished. Other trees were going, falling and criss-crossing like matches. He was amazed at the power of the wind. His own tree was swaying perilously, one woman was wailing and clutching the little girl, who in turn still hung on to the cat.

The man, holding the other child, touched Raoul's arm and pointed. He looked and saw the Mormon church careering drunkenly a hundred feet away. It had been torn from its foundations, and wind and sea were heaving and shoving it toward the lagoon. A frightful wall of water caught it, tilted it, and flung it against half a dozen cocoanut trees. The bunches of human fruit fell like ripe cocoanuts. The subsiding wave showed them on the ground, some lying motionless, others squirming and writhing. They reminded him strangely of ants. He was not shocked. He had risen above horror. Quite as a matter of course he noted the succeeding wave sweep the sand clean of the human wreckage. A third wave, more colossal than any he had yet seen, hurled the church into the lagoon, where it floated off into the obscurity to leeward, half-submerged, reminding him for all the world of a Noah's ark.

He looked for Captain Lynch's house, and was surprised to find it gone. Things certainly were happening quickly. He noticed that many of the people in the trees that still held had descended to the ground. The wind had yet again increased. His own tree showed that. It no longer swayed or bent over and back. Instead, it remained practically stationary, curbed in a rigid angle from the wind and merely vibrating. But the vibration was sickening. It was like that of a tuning-fork or the tongue of a jew's-harp. It was the rapidity of the vibration that made it so bad. Even though its roots held it, it could not stand the strain for long. Something would have to break.

Ah, there was one that had gone. He had not seen it go, but there it stood, the remnant, broken off half-way up the trunk. One did not know what happened unless one saw it. The mere crashing of trees and wails of human despair occupied no place in that mighty volume of sound. He chanced to be looking in Captain Lynch's direction when it happened. He saw the trunk of the tree, half-way up, splinter and part without noise. The head of the tree, with three sailors of the *Aorai* and the old captain, sailed off over the lagoon. It did not fall to the ground, but drove through the air like a piece of chaff. For a hundred yards he followed its flight, when it struck the water. He strained his eyes, and was sure that he saw Captain Lynch wave farewell.

Raoul did not wait for anything more. He touched the native and made signs to descend to the ground. The man was willing, but his women were paralyzed from terror, and he elected to remain with them. Raoul passed his rope around the tree and slid down. A rush of salt water went over his head. He held his breath and clung desperately to the rope. The water subsided, and in the shelter of the trunk he breathed once more. He fastened the rope more securely, and then was put under by another sea. One of the women slid down and joined him, the native remaining by the other woman, the two children, and the cat.

The supercargo had noticed how the groups clinging at the bases of the other trees continually diminished. Now he saw the process work out alongside him. It required all his strength to hold on, and the woman who had joined him was growing weaker. Each time he emerged from a sea he was surprised to find himself still there, and next, surprised to find the woman still there. At last he emerged to find himself alone. He looked up. The top of the tree had gone as well. At half its original height, a splintered end vibrated. He was safe. The roots still held, while the tree had been shorn of its windage. He began to climb up. He was so weak that he went slowly, and sea after sea caught him before he was above them. Then he tied himself to the trunk and stiffened his soul to face the night and he knew not what.

He felt very lonely in the darkness. At times it seemed to him that it was the end of the world and that he was the last one left alive. Still the wind increased. Hour after hour it increased. By what he calculated was eleven o'clock, the wind had become unbelievable. It was a horrible, monstrous thing, a screaming fury, a wall that smote and passed on but that continued to smite and pass on—a wall without end. It seemed to him that he had become light and ethereal; that it was he that was in motion; that he was being driven with inconceivable velocity through unending solidness. The wind was no longer air in motion. It had become substantial as water or quicksilver. He had a feeling that he could reach into it and tear it out in chunks as one might do with the meat in the carcass of a steer; that he could seize hold of the wind and hang on to it as a man might hang on to the face of a cliff.

The wind strangled him. He could not face it and breathe, for it rushed in through his mouth and nostrils, distending his lungs like bladders. At such moments it seemed to him that his body was being packed and swollen with solid earth. Only by pressing his lips to the trunk of the tree could he breathe. Also, the ceaseless impact of the wind exhausted him. Body and brain became wearied. He no longer observed, no longer thought, and was but semiconscious. One idea constituted his consciousness: *So this was a hurricane*. That one idea persisted irregularly. It was like a feeble flame that flickered occasionally. From a state of stupor he would return to it—*So this was a hurricane*. Then he would go off into another stupor.

The height of the hurricane endured from eleven at night till three in the morning, and it was at eleven that the tree in which clung Mapuhi and his women snapped off. Mapuhi rose to the surface of the lagoon, still clutching his daughter Ngakura. Only a South Sea islander could have lived in such a driving smother. The pandanus-tree, to which he attached himself, turned over and over in the froth and churn; and it was only by holding on at times and waiting, and at other times shifting his grips rapidly, that he was able to get his head and Ngakura's to the surface at intervals sufficiently near together to keep the breath in them. But the air was mostly water, what with flying spray and sheeted rain that poured along at right angles to the perpendicular.

It was ten miles across the lagoon to the farther ring of sand. Here, tossing tree-trunks, timbers, wrecks of cutters and wreckage of houses, killed nine out of ten of the miserable beings who survived the passage of the lagoon. Half-drowned, exhausted, they were hurled into this mad mortar of the elements and battered into formless flesh. But Mapuhi was fortunate. His chance was the one in ten; it fell to him by the freakage of fate. He emerged upon the sand, bleeding from a score of wounds. Ngakura's left arm was broken; the fingers of her right hand were crushed; and cheek and forehead were laid open to the bone. He clutched a tree that yet stood, and clung on, holding the girl and sobbing for air, while the waters of the lagoon washed by knee-high and at times waist-high.

At three in the morning the backbone of the hurricane broke. By five no more than a stiff breeze was blowing. And by six it was dead calm and the sun was shining. The sea had gone down. On the yet restless edge of the lagoon, Mapuhi saw the broken bodies of those that had failed in the landing. Undoubtedly Tefara and Nauri were among them. He went along the beach examining them, and came upon his wife, lying half in and half out of the water. He sat down and wept, making harsh animal-noises after the manner of primitive grief. Then she stirred uneasily, and groaned. He looked more closely. Not only was she alive, but she was uninjured. She was merely sleeping. Hers also had been the one chance in ten.

Of the twelve hundred alive the night before but three hundred remained. The Mormon missionary and a gendarme made the census. The lagoon was cluttered with corpses. Not a house nor a hut was standing. In the whole atoll not two stones remained one upon another. One in fifty of the cocoanut palms still stood, and they were wrecks, while on not one of them remained a single nut. There was no fresh water. The shallow wells that caught the surface seepage of the rain were filled with salt. Out of the lagoon a few soaked bags of flour were recovered. The survivors cut the hearts out of the fallen cocoanut trees and ate them. Here and there they crawled into tiny hutches, made by hollowing out the sand and covering over with fragments of metal roofing. The missionary made a crude still, but he could not distill water for three hundred persons. By the end of the second day, Raoul, taking a bath in the lagoon, discovered that his thirst was somewhat relieved. He cried out the news, and thereupon three hundred men, women, and children could have been seen, standing up to their necks in the lagoon and trying to drink water in through their skins. Their dead floated about them, or were stepped upon where they still lay upon the bottom. On the third day the people buried their dead and sat down to wait for the rescue steamers.

In the meantime, Nauri, torn from her family by the hurricane, had been swept away on an adventure of her own. Clinging to a rough plank that wounded and bruised her and that filled her body with splinters, she was thrown clear over the atoll and carried away to sea. Here, under the amazing buffets of mountains of water, she lost her plank. She was an old woman nearly sixty; but she was Paumotan born, and she had never been out of sight of the sea in her life. Swimming in the darkness, strangling, suffocating, fighting for air, she was struck a heavy blow on the shoulder by a cocoanut. On the instant her plan was formed, and she seized the nut. In the next hour she captured seven more. Tied together, they formed a life-buoy that preserved her life while at the same time it threatened to pound her to a jelly. She was a fat woman, and she bruised easily; but she had had experience of hurricanes, and, while she prayed to her shark god for protection from sharks, she waited for the wind to break. But at three o'clock she was in such a stupor that she did not know. Nor did she know at six o'clock when the dead calm settled down. She was shocked into consciousness when she was thrown upon the sand. She dug in with raw and bleeding hands and feet and clawed against the backwash until she was beyond the reach of the waves.

She knew where she was. This land could be no other than the tiny islet of Takokota. It had no lagoon. No one lived upon it. Hikueru was fifteen miles away. She could not see Hikueru, but she knew that it lay to the south. The days went by, and she lived on the cocoanuts that had kept her afloat. They supplied her with drinking water and with food. But she did not drink all she wanted, nor eat all she wanted. Rescue was problematical. She saw the smoke of the rescue steamers on the horizon, but what steamer could be expected to come to lonely, uninhabited Takokota?

From the first she was tormented by corpses. The sea persisted in flinging them upon her bit of sand, and she persisted, until her strength failed, in thrusting them back into the sea where the sharks tore at them and devoured them. When her strength failed, the bodies festooned her beach with ghastly horror, and she withdrew from them as far as she could, which was not far.

By the tenth day her last cocoanut was gone, and she was shrivelling from thirst. She dragged herself along the sand, looking for cocoanuts. It was strange that so many bodies floated up, and no nuts. Surely, there were more cocoanuts afloat than dead men! She gave up at last, and lay exhausted. The end had come. Nothing remained but to wait for death.

Coming out of a stupor, she became slowly aware that she was gazing at a patch of sandy-red hair on the head of a corpse. The sea flung the body toward her, then drew it back. It turned over, and she saw that it had no face. Yet there was something familiar about that patch of sandy-red hair. An hour passed. She did not exert herself to make the identification. She was waiting to die, and it mattered little to her what man that thing of horror once might have been.

But at the end of the hour she sat up slowly and stared at the corpse. An unusually large wave had thrown it beyond the reach of the lesser waves. Yes, she was right; that patch of red hair could belong to but one man in the Paumotus. It was Levy, the German Jew, the man who had bought the pearl and carried it away on the *Hira.* Well, one thing was evident: the *Hira* had been lost. The pearl-buyer's god of fishermen and thieves had gone back on him.

She crawled down to the dead man. His shirt had been torn away, and she could see the leather money-belt about his waist. She held her breath and tugged at the buckles. They gave easier than she had expected, and she crawled hurriedly away across the sand, dragging the belt after her. Pocket after pocket she unbuckled in the belt and found empty. Where could he have put it? In the last pocket of all she found it, the first and only pearl he had bought on the voyage. She crawled a few feet farther, to escape the pestilence of the belt, and examined the pearl. It was the one Mapuhi had found and been robbed of by Toriki. She weighed it in her hand and rolled it back and forth caressingly. But in it she saw no intrinsic beauty. What she did see was the house Mapuhi and Tefara and she had builded so carefully in their minds. Each time she looked at the pearl she saw the house in all its details, including the octagon-drop-clock on the wall. That was something to live for.

She tore a strip from her *ahu* and tied the pearl securely about her neck. Then she went on along the beach, panting and groaning, but resolutely seeking for cocoanuts. Quickly she found one, and, as she glanced around, a second. She broke one, drinking its water, which was mildewy, and eating the last particle of the meat. A little later she found a shattered dugout. Its outrigger was gone, but she was hopeful, and, before the day was out, she found the outrigger. Every find was an augury. The pearl was a talisman. Late in the afternoon she saw a wooden box floating low in the water. When she dragged it out on the beach its contents rattled, and inside she found ten tins of salmon. She opened one by hammering it on the canoe. When a leak was started, she drained the tin. After that she spent several hours in extracting the salmon, hammering and squeezing it out a morsel at a time.

Eight days longer she waited for rescue. In the meantime she fastened the outrigger back on the canoe, using for lashings all the cocoanut-fibre she could find, and also what remained of her *ahu.* The canoe was badly cracked, and she could not make it water-tight; but a calabash made from a cocoanut she stored on board for a bailer. She was hard put for a paddle. With a piece of tin she sawed off all her hair close to the scalp. Out of the hair she braided a cord; and by means of the cord she lashed a three-foot piece of broom-handle to a board from the salmon case. She gnawed wedges with her teeth and with them wedged the lashing.

On the eighteenth day, at midnight, she launched the canoe through the surf and started back for Hikueru. She was an old woman. Hardship had stripped her fat from her till scarcely more than bones and skin and a few stringy muscles remained. The canoe was large and should have been paddled by three strong men. But she did it alone, with a make-shift paddle. Also, the canoe leaked badly, and one-third of her time was devoted to bailing. By clear daylight she looked vainly for Hikueru. Astern, Takokota had sunk beneath the sea-rim. The sun blazed down on her nakedness, compelling her body to surrender its moisture. Two tins of salmon were left, and in the course of the day she battered holes in them and drained the liquid. She had no time to waste in extracting the meat. A current was setting to the westward, she made westing whether she made southing or not.

In the early afternoon, standing upright in the canoe, she sighted Hikueru. Its wealth of cocoanut palms was gone. Only here and there, at wide intervals, could she see the ragged remnants of trees. The sight cheered her. She was nearer than she had thought. The current was setting her to the westward. She bore up against it and paddled on. The wedges in the paddle-lashing worked loose, and she lost much time, at frequent intervals, in driving them tight. Then there was the bailing. One hour in three she had to cease paddling in order to bail. And all the time she drifted to the westward.

By sunset Hikueru bore southeast from her, three miles away. There was a full moon, and by eight o'clock the land was due east and two miles away. She struggled on for another hour, but the land was as far away as ever. She was in the main grip of the current; the canoe was too large; the paddle was too inadequate; and too much of her time and strength was wasted in bailing. Besides, she was very weak and growing weaker. Despite her efforts, the canoe was drifting off to the westward.

She breathed a prayer to her shark god, slipped over the side, and began to swim. She was actually refreshed by the water, and quickly left the canoe astern. At the end of an hour the land was perceptibly nearer. Then came her fright. Right before her eyes, not twenty feet away, a large fin cut the water. She swam steadily toward it, and slowly it glided away, curving off toward the right and circling around her. She kept her eyes on the fin and swam on. When the fin disappeared, she lay face downward on the water and watched. When the fin reappeared she resumed her swimming. The monster was lazy—she could see that. Without doubt he had been well fed since the hurricane. Had he been very hungry, she knew he would not have hesitated from making a dash for her. He was fifteen feet long, and one bite, she knew, could cut her in half.

But she did not have any time to waste on him. Whether she swam or not, the current drew away from the land just the same. A half-hour went by, and the shark began to grow bolder. Seeing no harm in her he drew closer, in narrowing circles, cocking his eyes at her impudently as he slid past. Sooner or later, she knew well enough, he would get up sufficient courage to dash at her. She resolved to play first. It was a desperate act she meditated. She was an old woman, alone in the sea and weak from starvation and hardship; and yet she, in the face of this sea-tiger, must anticipate his dash by herself dashing at him. She swam on, waiting her chance. At last he passed languidly by, barely eight feet away. She rushed at him suddenly, feigning that she was attacking him. He gave a wild flirt of his tail as he fled away, and his sandpaper hide, striking her, took off her skin from elbow to shoulder. He swam rapidly, in a widening circle, and at last disappeared.

In the hole in the sand, covered over by fragments of metal roofing, Mapuhi and Tefara lay disputing.

"If you had done as I said," charged Tefara, for the thousandth time, "and hidden the pearl and told no one, you would have it now."

"But Huru-Huru was with me when I opened the shell—have I not told you so times and times and times without end?"

"And now we shall have no house. Raoul told me to-day that if you had not sold the pearl to Toriki—"

"I did not sell it. Toriki robbed me."

"— that if you had not sold the pearl, he would give you five thousand French dollars, which is ten thousand Chili."

"He has been talking to his mother," Mapuhi explained. "She has an eye for a pearl."

"And now the pearl is lost," Tefara complained.

"It paid my debt with Toriki. That is twelve hundred I have made, anyway."

"Toriki is dead," she cried. "They have heard no word of his schooner. She was lost along with the *Aorai* and the *Hira*. Will Toriki pay you the three hundred credit he promised? No, because Toriki is dead. And had you found no pearl, would you to-day owe Toriki the twelve hundred? No, because Toriki is dead, and you cannot pay dead men."

"But Levy did not pay Toriki," Mapuhi said. "He gave him a piece of paper that was good for the money in Papeete; and now Levy is dead and cannot pay; and Toriki is dead and the paper lost with him, and the pearl is lost with Levy. You are right, Tefara. I have lost the pearl, and got nothing for it. Now let us sleep."

He held up his hand suddenly and listened. From without came a noise, as of one who breathed heavily and with pain. A hand fumbled against the mat that served for a door.

"Who is there?" Mapuhi cried.

"Nauri," came the answer. "Can you tell me where is my son, Mapuhi?"

Tefara screamed and gripped her husband's arm.

"A ghost!" she chattered. "A ghost!"

Mapuhi's face was a ghastly yellow. He clung weakly to his wife.

"Good woman," he said in faltering tones, striving to disguise his voice, "I know your son well. He is living on the east side of the lagoon."

From without came the sound of a sigh. Mapuhi began to feel elated. He had fooled the ghost.

"But where do you come from, old woman?" he asked.

"From the sea," was the dejected answer.

"I knew it! I knew it!" screamed Tefara, rocking to and fro.

"Since when has Tefara bedded in a strange house?" came Nauri's voice through the matting.

Mapuhi looked fear and reproach at his wife. It was her voice that had betrayed them.

"And since when has Mapuhi, my son, denied his old mother?" the voice went on.

"No, no, I have not—Mapuhi has not denied you," he cried. "I am not Mapuhi. He is on the east end of the lagoon, I tell you."

Ngakura sat up in bed and began to cry. The matting started to shake.

"What are you doing?" Mapuhi demanded.

"I am coming in," said the voice of Nauri.

One end of the matting lifted. Tefara tried to dive under the blankets, but Mapuhi held on to her. He had to hold on to something. Together, struggling with each other, with shivering bodies and chattering teeth, they gazed with protruding eyes at the lifting mat. They saw Nauri, dripping with sea-water, without her *ahu*, creep in. They rolled over backward from her and fought for Ngakura's blanket with which to cover their heads.

"You might give your old mother a drink of water," the ghost said plaintively.

"Give her a drink of water," Tefara commanded in a shaking voice.

"Give her a drink of water," Mapuhi passed on the command to Ngakura.

And together they kicked out Ngakura from under the blanket. A minute later, peeping, Mapuhi saw the ghost drinking. When it reached out a shaking hand and laid it on his, he felt the weight of it and was convinced that it was no ghost. Then he emerged, dragging Tefara after him, and in a few minutes all were listening to Nauri's tale. And when she told of Levy, and dropped the pearl into Tefara's hand, even she was reconciled to the reality of her mother-in-law.

"In the morning," said Tefara, "you will sell the pearl to Raoul for five thousand French."

"The house?" objected Nauri.

"He will build the house," Tefara answered. "He says it will cost four thousand French. Also will he give one thousand French in credit, which is two thousand Chili."

"And it will be six fathoms long?" Nauri queried.

"Ay," answered Mapuhi, "six fathoms."

"And in the middle room will be the octagon-drop-clock?"

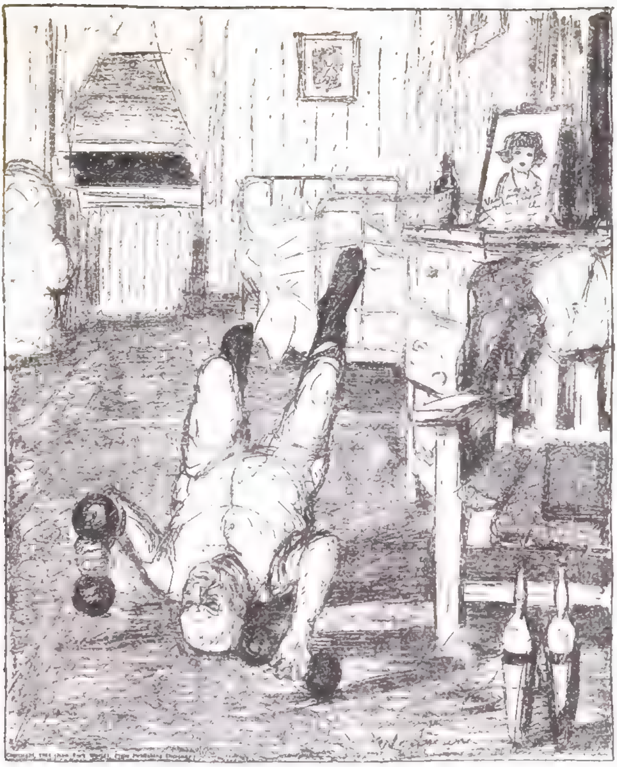
"Ay, and the round table as well."

"Then give me something to eat, for I am hungry," said Nauri, complacently. "And after that we will sleep, for I am weary. And to-morrow we will have more talk about the house before we sell the pearl. It will be better if we take the thousand French in cash. Money is ever better than credit in buying goods from the traders."

A Wholly Unscholastic Opinion

By JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

PLAIN hoss-sense in poetry-writin'
Would jes' knock sentiment a-kitin'!
Mostly poets is all star-gazin'
And moanin' and groanin' and paraphrasin'!



What Love Will Do

Drawn by Dennis Wortman

What Love Will Do

IT'S BEING PROVED EVERY DAY

A lady may continue to have a heart, although she is somewhat stouter than she was when a schoolgirl, and a man his feelings although he gets his hair from Truefitt's.

THACKERAY.

THE ARCHETYPE OF MARTYRS TO CUPID'S BARBED HUMOR

MALVOLIO [*having read the decoy letter*]—Daylight and champain discovers not more: this is open. I will be proud, I will read politic authors, I will baffle Sir Toby, I will wash off gross acquaintance, I will be point-devise the very man. I do not now fool myself, to let imagination jade me; for every reason excites to this, that my lady loves me. She did commend my yellow stockings of late, she did praise my leg being cross-gartered; and in this she manifests herself to my love, and with a kind of injunction drives me to these habits of her liking. I thank my stars I am happy. I will be strange, stout, in yellow stockings and cross-gartered, even with the swiftness of putting on. Jove and my stars be praised! Here is yet a postscript.

(*Reads*) "Thou canst not choose but know who I am. If thou entertainest my love, let it appear in thy smiling; thy smiles become thee well; therefore in my presence still smile, dear my sweet, I prithee."

Jove, I thank thee. I will smile.

MARIA—If you desire the spleen, and will laugh yourself into stitches, follow me.

Yond gull Malvolio is turned heathen, a very renegade; for there is no Christian, that means to be saved by believing rightly, can ever believe such impossible passages of grossness. He's in yellow stockings.

SIR TOBY—And cross-gartered?

MARIA—Most villainously; like a pedant that keeps a school i' the church. I have dogged him, like his murderer. He does obey every point of the letter that I dropped to betray him; he does smile his face into more lines than is in the new map with the augmentation of the Indies: you have not seen such a thing as 'tis. I can hardly forbear hurling things at him. I know my lady will strike him: if she do, he'll smile and take 't for a great favour. . . .

. . . .

OLIVIA—How now, Malvolio!

MALVOLIO—Sweet lady, ho, ho.

OLIVIA—Smilest thou? I sent for thee upon a sad occasion.

MALVOLIO—Sad, lady! I could be sad: this does make some obstruction in the blood, this cross-gartering; but what of that? if it please the eye of one, it is with me as the very true sonnet is, "Please one and please all."

OLIVIA—Why, how dost thou, man?—what is the matter with thee? SHAKESPEARE.

*

MY UNCLE TOBY

Let love, therefore, be what it will,—my Uncle Toby fell into it. . . .

"I am in love, Corporal!" quoth my Uncle Toby.

"In love!" said the Corporal, "your Honour was very well the day before yesterday, when I was telling your Honour the story of the King of Bohemia." "Bohemia!" said my Uncle Toby—musing a long time "What became of that story, Trim?"

"We lost it, an' please your Honour, somehow betwixt us; but your Honour was as free from love then, as I am." "'Twas just whilst thou wents't off with the wheelbarrow—with Mrs. Wadman," quoth my Uncle Toby. "She has left a ball here," added my Uncle Toby, pointing to his breast—

"She can no more, an' please your Honour, stand a siege, than she can fly," cried the Corporal.

"But as we are neighbours, Trim—the best way, I think, is to let her know it civilly first," quoth my Uncle Toby.

"Now, if I might presume," said the corporal, "to differ from your Honour"—

"Why else do I talk to thee, Trim?" said my Uncle Toby mildly.

"Then I would begin with a good thundering attack upon her, in return—and telling her civilly afterwards; for if she knows anything of your Honour's being in love beforehand"—"L—d help her! She knows no more at present of it, Trim," said my Uncle Toby, "than the child unborn."

Precious souls!

Mrs. Wadman had told it, with all its circumstances, to Mrs. Bridget, twenty-four hours before. LAURENCE STERNE.

*

A DESPERATE CASE

RALPH ROISTER DOISTER—I will go home and die.

MATHEW MERYGREEKE—God have mercy on your soul, ah, good gentleman. That e'er ye should thus die for an unkind woman. Will ye drink once ere ye go?

R. ROISTER—No, no, I will none.

M. MERY—How feels your soul to God?

R. ROISTER—I am nigh gone.

M. MERY—*Placebo dilexi* Master Roister Doister will straight go home and die.

R. ROISTER—Heigh-ho! Alas, the pangs of death my heart do break!

M. MERY—Hold your peace, for shame, sir, a dead man may not speak!

NEQUANDO—What mourners and what torches shall we have?

R. ROISTER—None.

M. MERY—*Dirige*. He will go darkling to his grave. *Neque lux, neque crux, neque* mourners, *neque* clink. He will steal to heaven, unknowing to God, I think.

NICOLAS UDALL.

⁂

THE VERY WISE MERLIN

Merlin fell in a dotage on the damsel that King Pellinore brought to the court with him; and she was one of the damsels of the lake, which hight Nimue. But Merlin would let her have no rest, but always he would be with her in every place; and ever she made Merlin good cheer, till she had learned of him all manner of things that she desired, and he was so sore assotted upon her that he might not be from her. . . . And within a while the Lady of the Lake departed, and Merlin went evermore with her wheresoever she went. . . . And always Merlin lay about the lady; and she was ever passing weary of him, and fain would have been delivered of him; for she was afraid of him because he was a devil's son, and she could not put him away be any means.

And so upon a time it happened that Merlin showed her a rock where was a great wonder, and wrought by enchantment, which went under a stone. So, by her subtle craft and working, she made Merlin go under the stone to let her wit of the marvels there; but she wrought so there for him that he came never out, for all the craft that he could do: and so she departed, and left Merlin. SIR THOMAS MALORY.

⁂

THE BOX THAT HAS BEEN OFTEN ENTERED

The doctor entered the cabinet and got into one of the three coffers, which Arouya herself locked, saying to Danischmend, "Oh, my dear doctor! Do not get impatient. As soon as my brother and my husband have retired I shall come and rejoin you." . . . Instead of suspecting the sincerity of the lady and imagining that the position he was in might be a trap set for him, he preferred to persuade himself that he was loved, and to yield to the sweetest illusions in which lovers ordinarily indulge who flatter themselves in vain that they are about to find their affection returned. THOUSAND AND ONE DAYS.

⁂

THE GENTLEMAN OF FIFTY

Dans la cinquantaine! The reflection should produce a gravity in men. Such a number of years will not ring like bridal bells in a man's ears. I have my books about me, my horses, my dogs, a contented household, I move in the center of a perfect machine, and I am dissatisfied. I rise early. I do not digest badly. What is wrong?

The calamity of my case is that I am in danger of betraying what is wrong with me to others, without knowing it myself. Some woman will be suspecting and tattling, because she has nothing else to do. GEORGE MEREDITH.

⁂

LE BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME

M. JOURDAIN [*After having made two bows, finding himself too close to Dorimène*]—A little farther away, Madam.

DORIMÈNE—How?

M. JOUR.—One step, if you please.

DORI.—What then?

M. JOUR.—Fall back a little for the third.

DORANTE—Madam, M. Jourdain knows how to be genteel.

M. JOUR.—Madam, this is a great honour to me, to be sufficiently fortunate, to be so happy, to have the felicity, that you have had the goodness of granting me the favour, of doing me the honour of honouring me with the favour of your presence; and if I had also the merit of meriting a merit like yours, and that Heaven . . . envious of my happiness . . . had accorded me . . . the advantage of finding myself worthy . . . of . . .

MOLIÈRE.

THE LORDLY HAMILTON-NELSON TRIANGLE

At the moment considerably subsequent to his return to England, when he was charging her with neglecting him in her excessive care for their friend's interest, and was so far at war with her as to threaten her with "separation," the poor old man paused in his outbreak of petulance and splenetic jealousy to avow his undiminished confidence, that her affection for their hero was purely platonic. . . . Sir William was soothed in his dying illness by Nelson's personal ministrations, and while expiring in his wife's arms lay with his right hand in the sailor's remaining hand. J. C. JEAFFRESON.

⁂

MR. PETER MAGNUS

"Why, then, he-he-he!" said Mr. Peter Magnus, with a bashful titter, "what should you think, Mr. Pickwick, if I had come down here, to make a proposal, sir, eh? He-he-he—!"

"Think! That you were very likely to succeed," replied Mr. Pickwick with one of his beaming smiles.

"Ah!" said Mr. Magnus. "But do you really think so, Mr. Pickwick? Do you, though?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Wait till tomorrow, double the chance then . . . There is a suit of clothes in that, and a hat in that box, which I expect, in the effect they will produce, will be invaluable to me, sir."

CHARLES DICKENS.

⁂

TAMED

"In the meantime, Bazaroff occupied himself with inspecting the albums. "What a meek individual I have become," he said to himself. TURGENIEV."

⁂

THE LORD CHANCELLOR'S DILEMMA

"I thank your lordships. The feelings of a Lord Chancellor who is in love with a ward of court are not to be envied. What is his position? Can he give his own consent to his own marriage with his own ward? Can he marry his own ward without his own consent? And if he marries his own ward without his own consent can he commit himself for contempt of his own court? Can he appear by counsel before himself to move for arrest of his own judgment? Ah, my lords, it is indeed painful to have to sit upon a woolsack which is stuffed with such thorns as these." W. S. GILBERT.

⁂

RADHA AND KRISHNA

She despises essence of sandalwood, and even by moonlight sits brooding over her gloomy sorrow; she declares the gale of Malaya to be venom, and the sandal trees through which it has breathed to have been the haunt of serpents. Thus, O Madhava, is she afflicted in thy absence with the pain which love's dart has occasioned; her soul is fixed on thee. . . . Her face is like a water lily veiled in the dew of tears, and her eyes appear like moons eclipsed. JAYADEVA.

⁂

THE WIFE

Now I am married. It is evening. I am sitting in my study reading. Behind me on the sofa Sasha is sitting munching something noisily. I want a glass of beer.

"Sasha, look for the corkscrew . . ." I say. "It's lying about somewhere."

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Sasha leaps up, rummages in a disorderly way among two or three heaps of papers, drops the matches, and without finding the corkscrew, sits down in silence. . . . Five minutes pass,—ten. . . . I begin to be fretted both by thirst and vexation.

"Sasha, do look for the corkscrew," I say.

Sasha leaps up again and rummages among the papers near me. Her munching and rustling of the papers affects me like the sound of sharpening knives against each other. . . . I get up and begin looking for the corkscrew myself. At last it is found and the beer is uncorked. Sasha remains by the table and begins telling me something at great length.

"You'd better read something, Sasha," I say.

. . . .

I remember in my old Lovelace days I have cast off women for a stain on their stockings or for one foolish word, or for not cleaning their teeth, and now I forgive everything: the munching, the muddling about after the corkscrew, the slovenliness, the long talking about nothing that matters; I forgive it all almost unconsciously, with no effort of will, as though Sasha's mistakes were my mistakes, and many things which would have made me wince in the old days move me to tenderness and even rapture. The explanation of this forgiveness of everything lies in my love for Sasha, but what is the explanation of the love itself, I really don't know. ANTON CHEKHOV.

❧

WHEN FORSYTE BETRAYED FORSYTE

Nothing that she could have done, nothing that she *had* done, brought home to him like this the inner significance of her act. For the moment, perhaps, he understood nearly all there was to understand . . . that she had suffered—that she was to be pitied.

In that moment of emotion he betrayed the Forsyte in him—forgot himself—his interests—his property—was capable of almost anything; was lifted into the pure ether of the selfless and unpractical. JOHN GALSWORTHY.

❧

THE UPSET

Little did Mr. Brumley reckon, when first he looked up from his laces at Black Strand, how completely that pretty young woman in the dark furs was destined to shatter all the assumptions that had served his life. H. G. WELLS.

❧

IN A BALCONY

I will learn, I will place my life on you,
Teach me but how to keep what I have won!
Am I so old? This hair was early grey;
But joy ere now has brought hair brown again,
And joy will bring the cheek's red back, I feel.
I could sing once too; that was in my youth. ROBERT BROWNING.

❧

LOVE VS. REASON

Though the doctor could not make pride strong enough to conquer love, yet he exalted the former to make some stand against the latter; insomuch that my poor Amelia, I believe, more than once flattered herself that her reason had gained entire victory over her passions, till love brought up a reinforcement, if I may use that term, of tender ideas, and bore all before him. HENRY FIELDING.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS, SEE MAGAZINE ADVERTISING PAGES

'Tis now well, lady, you should
Use of this dentifrice I prescribed you too,
To clear your teeth; and the prepared pomatum
To smooth the skin. A lady cannot be
Too curious of her form, that still would hold
The heart of such a person. . . . BEN JONSON.

NO RESPECTER OF CASTE

Fat Haar, grappling his tall partner with uplifted arm, galloped away without a moment's intermission, balancing and stamping with his heels to mark the time, and looking up at her from time to time with an air of profound admiration; while she, with her hooked nose, twirled about like a weather-cock. ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN.

WHAT HAPPENED TO JOHANNES

When I realised from the silence of my Arendse that I must have done my errand, I ventured hesitatingly to press her hand to my lips, and heavenly fires shot blissful from her fingers to the depths of my soul. I lost possession of myself. I retreated backwards, bowing every moment, and . . . at last came to the head of a steep staircase without noticing it. JOHANNES EWALD.

THE HERO OF A THOUSAND BATTLES

CHARLES XII (*King of Sweden, under the assumed name of the Count D'Olfen, aside*)—Would anyone believe that I am Charles the Twelfth? I begin to doubt it myself. Nations tremble at my name, yet I—I won't say tremble—but feel very much like a fool in the presence of a simple girl! . . .

Come, come, this won't do. Though she doesn't know who I am, I must remember that I do. CHARLES DANCE.

JOS IN THE TOILS

As Jos's buggy drove up, and while, after his usual thundering knock and pompous bustle at the door, the ex-collector of Boggley-Wollah laboured up stairs to the drawing-room, knowing glances were telegraphed between Osborne and Miss Sedley, and the pair, smiling archly, looked at Rebecca, who actually blushed as she bent her fair ringlets over her knitting. How her heart beat as Joseph appeared,—Joseph puffing from the staircase in shiny, creaking boots,—Joseph, in a new waistcoat, red with heat and nervousness, and blushing behind his wadded neckcloth.

. . . .

And before he had time to ask how, Mr. Joseph Sedley of the East India Company's service was actually seated tête-à-tête with a young lady, looking at her with a most killing expression; his arms stretched out before her in an imploring attitude, and his hands bound in a web of green silk, which she was unwinding. THACKERAY.

THE OSTRICH

Jo took her home, and from that Sunday night he began to strain at the leash. He took his sisters out, dutifully, but he would suggest, with a carelessness that deceived none, "Don't you want one of your girl friends to come along? That little What's-her-Name—, Emily, or something. So long's I've got three of you, I might as well have a full squad."

EDNA FERBER.

The Tents of the Arabs

By LORD DUNSANY

Dunsany

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

The King.
Bel-Narb } *camel-drivers.*
Aoob }
The Chamberlain.
Zabra. *A notable.*
Eznarza. *A gipsy of the desert.*
Scene:—*Outside the gate of the city of Thalanna.*
Time:—*Uncertain.*

ACT I

Outside the gate of the city of Thalanna.

Bel-Narb—By evening we shall be in the desert again.

Aoob—Yes.

Bel-Narb—Then no more city for us for many weeks.

Aoob—Ah!

Bel-Narb—We shall see the lights come out, looking back from the camel track; that is the last we shall see of it.

Aoob—We shall be in the desert then.

Bel-Narb—The old angry desert.

Aoob—How cunningly the desert hides his wells. You would say he had an enmity with man. He does not welcome you as the cities do.

Bel-Narb—He *has* an enmity. I hate the desert.

Aoob—I think there is nothing in the world so beautiful as cities.

Bel-Narb—Cities are beautiful things.

Aoob—I think they are loveliest a little after dawn when night falls off from the houses. They draw it away from them slowly and let it fall like a cloak and stand quite naked in their beauty to shine in some broad river; and the light comes up and kisses them on the forehead. I think they are loveliest then. The voices of men and women begin to arise in the streets, scarce audible, one by one, till a slow loud murmur arises and all the voices are one. I often think the city speaks to me then: she says in that voice of hers, "Aoob, Aoob, who one of these days shall die, I am not earthly, I have been always, I shall not die."

Bel-Narb—I do not think that cities are loveliest at dawn. We can see dawn in the desert any day. I think they are loveliest just when the sun is set and a dusk steals along the narrower streets, a dusk that is not of the night yet not of the day, a kind of mystery in which we can see cloaked figures and yet not quite discern whose figures they be. And just when it would be dark, and out in the desert there would be nothing to see but a black horizon and a black sky on top of it, just then the swinging lanterns are lighted up and lights come out in windows one by one and all the colours of the raiments change. Then a woman perhaps will slip from a little door and go away up the street into the night, and a man perhaps will steal by with a dagger for some old quarrel's sake, and Skarmi will light up his house to sell brandy all night long, and men will sit on benches outside his door playing skabásh by the glare of a small green lantern, while they light great bubbling pipes and smoke nargroob. O, it is all very good to watch. And I like to think as I smoke and see these things that somewhere, far away, the desert has put up a huge red cloud like a wing so that all the Arabs know that next day the Siroc will blow, the accursed breath of Eblis the father of Satan.

Aoob—Yes, it is pleasant to think of the Siroc when one is safe in a city, but I do not like to think about it now, for before the day is out we will be taking pilgrims to Mecca, and who ever prophesied or knew by wit what the desert had in store? Going into the desert is like throwing bone after bone to a dog, some he will catch and some of them he will drop. He may catch our bones, or we may go by and come to gleaming Mecca. O-ho, I would I were a merchant with a little booth in a frequented street to sit all day and barter.

BEL-NARB—Aye, it is easier to cheat some lord coming to buy silk and ornaments in a city than to cheat death in the desert. Oh, the desert, the desert, I love the beautiful cities and I hate the desert.

AOOB (*pointing off* L.)—Who is that?

BEL-NARB—What? There by the desert's edge where the camels are?

AOOB—Yes, who is it?

BEL-NARB—He is staring across the desert the way that the camels go. They say that the King goes down to the edge of the desert and often stares across it. He stands there for a long time of an evening looking towards Mecca.

AOOB—Of what use is it to the King to look towards Mecca? He cannot go to Mecca. He cannot go into the desert for one day. Messengers would run after him and cry his name and bring him back to the council-hall or to the chamber of judgments. If they could not find him their heads would be struck off and put high up upon some windy roof: the judges would point at them and say, "They see better there!"

BEL-NARB—No. The King cannot go away into the desert. If God were to make *me* King I would go down to the edge of the desert once, and I would shake the sand out of my turban and out of my beard and then I would never look at the desert again. Greedy and parched old parent of thousands of devils! He might cover the wells with sand, and blow with his Siroc, year after year and century after century, and never earn one of my curses—if God made *me* King.

AOOB—They say you are like the King.

BEL-NARB—Yes, I am like the King. Because his father disguised himself as a camel-driver and came through our villages. I often say to myself, "God is just. And if I could disguise myself as the King and drive him out to be a camel-driver, that would please God for He is just."

AOOB—If you did this God would say, "Look at Bel-Narb, whom I made to be a camel-driver and who has forgotten this." And then he would forget you, Bel-Narb.

BEL-NARB—Who knows what God would say?

AOOB—Who knows? His ways are wonderful.

BEL-NARB—I would not do this thing, Aoob. I would not do it. It is only what I say to myself as I smoke, or at night out in the desert. I say to myself, "Bel-Narb is King in Thalanna." And then I say, "Chamberlain, bring Skarmi here with his brandy and his lanterns and boards to play skabásh, and let all the town come and drink before the palace and magnify my name."

PILGRIMS (*calling, off*)—Bel-Narb! Bel-Narb! Child of two dogs. Come and untether your camels. Come and start for holy Mecca.

BEL-NARB—A curse on the desert.

AOOB—The camels are rising. The caravan starts for Mecca. Farewell, beautiful city. [*Pilgrims' voices off:* "BEL-NARB! "BEL-NARB!"]

BEL-NARB—I come, children of sin. [*Exeunt* BEL-NARB *and* AOOB. *The* KING *enters through the great door, crowned. He sits upon the step.*]

KING—A crown should not be worn upon the head. A sceptre should not be carried in Kings' hands. But a crown should be wrought into a golden chain, and a sceptre driven stake-wise into the ground so that a King may be chained to it by the ankle. Then he would *know* that he might not stray away into the beautiful desert and might never see the palm trees by the wells. O Thalanna, Thalanna, how I hate this city with its narrow, narrow ways, and evening after evening drunken men playing skabásh in the scandalous gambling house of that old scoundrel Skarmi! O that I might marry the child of some unkingly house that generation to generation had never known a city, and that we might ride from here down the long track through the desert, always we two alone till we came to the tents of the Arabs! And the crown—some foolish, greedy man should be given it to his sorrow. And all this may not be, for a King is yet a King. [*Enter* CHAMBERLAIN *through door.*]

CHAMBERLAIN—Your Majesty!

KING—Well, my lord Chamberlain, have you *more* work for me to do?

CHAMBERLAIN—Yes, there is much to do.

KING—I had hoped for freedom for this evening, for the faces of the camels are towards Mecca, and I would see the caravans move off into the desert where I may not go.

CHAMBERLAIN—There is very much for your Majesty to do. Iktra has revolted.

KING—Where is Iktra?

CHAMBERLAIN—It is a little country tributary to your Majesty beyond Zebdarlon, up among the hills.

KING—Almost, had it not been for this, almost I had asked you to let me go away among the camel-drivers to golden Mecca. I have done the work of a King now for five years and listened to my councillors, and all the while the desert called to me; he said, "Come to the tents of my children, to the tents of my children!" And all the while I dwelt among these walls.

CHAMBERLAIN—If your Majesty left the city now——

KING—I will not, we must raise an army to punish the men of Iktra.

CHAMBERLAIN—Your Majesty will appoint the commanders by name. A tribe of your Majesty's fighting men must be summoned from Agrarva and another from Coloono, the jungle city, as well as one from Mirsk. This must be done by warrants sealed by your hand. Your Majesty's advisers await you in the council-hall.

KING—The sun is very low. Why have the caravans not started yet?

CHAMBERLAIN—I do not know. And then your Majesty——

KING—[*Laying his hand on the Chamberlain's arm.*] Look, look! It is the shadows of the camels moving towards Mecca. How silently they slip over the ground, beautiful shadows. Soon they are out in the desert flat on the golden sands. And then the sun will set and they will be one with night.

CHAMBERLAIN—If your Majesty has time for such things there are the camels themselves.

KING—No, no, I do not wish to watch the camels. They can never take me out to the beautiful desert to be free forever from cities. Here I must stay to do the work of a King. Only my dreams can go, and the shadows of the camels carry them, to find peace by the tents of the Arabs.

CHAMBERLAIN—Will your Majesty now come to the council-hall?

KING—Yes, yes, I come.—[*Voices off:* "Ho *Yo!* Ho *Yay!* Ho *Yo.* Ho *Yay!*"] Now the whole caravan has started. Hark to the drivers of the baggage-camels. They will run behind them for the first ten miles, and to-morrow they will mount them. They will be out of sight of Thalanna then, and the desert will lie all round them with sunlight falling on its golden smiles. And a new look will come into their faces. I am sure that the desert whispers to them by night saying, "Be at peace, my children, at peace, my children." [*Meanwhile the Chamberlain has opened the door for the King and is waiting there bowing, with his hand resolutely on the opened door.*]

CHAMBERLAIN—Your Majesty will come to the council-hall?

KING—Yes, I will come. Had it not been for Iktra I might have gone away and lived in the golden desert for a year, and seen holy Mecca.

CHAMBERLAIN—Perhaps your Majesty might have gone had it not been for Iktra.

KING—My curse upon Iktra! [*He goes through the doorway. As they stand in doorway enter* Zabra, R.]

ZABRA—Your Majesty.

KING—O-ho. More work for an unhappy King.

ZABRA—Iktra is pacified.

KING—Is pacified?

ZABRA—It happened suddenly. The men of Iktra met with a few of your Majesty's fighting men and an arrow chanced to kill the leader of the revolt, and therefore the mob fled away although they were many, and they have all cried for three hours, "Great is the King!"

KING—I will even yet see Mecca and the dreamed-of tents of the Arabs. I will go down now into the golden sands, I——

CHAMBERLAIN—Your Majesty——

KING—In a few years I will return to you.

CHAMBERLAIN—Your Majesty, it cannot be. We could not govern the people for more than a year. They would say, "The King is dead, the King——"

KING—Then I will return in a year. In one year only.

CHAMBERLAIN—It is a long time, your Majesty.

KING—I will return at noon a year from to-day.

CHAMBERLAIN—But, your Majesty, a princess is being sent for from Tharba.

KING—I thought one was coming from Karshish.

CHAMBERLAIN—It has been thought more advisable that your Majesty should wed in Tharba. The passes across the mountains belong to the King of Tharba and he has great traffic with Sharan and the Isles.

KING—Let it be as you will.

CHAMBERLAIN—But, your Majesty, the ambassadors start this week; the princess will be here in three months' time.

KING—Let her come in a year and a day.

CHAMBERLAIN—Your Majesty!

KING—Farewell, I am in haste. I go to make ready for the desert [*exit through door still speaking*], the olden, golden mother of happy men.

CHAMBERLAIN [*To* Zabra.] One from whom God had not withheld all wisdom would not have given that message to our crazy young King.

Zabra—But it must be known. Many things might happen if it were not known at once.

Chamberlain—I knew it this morning. He is off to the desert now.

Zabra—That is evil indeed; but we can lure him back.

Chamberlain—Perhaps not for many days.

Zabra—The King's favour is like gold.

Chamberlain—It is like much gold. Who are the Arabs that the King's favour should be cast among them? The walls of their houses are canvas. Even the common snail has a finer wall to his house.

Zabra—Oh, it is most evil. Alas that I told him this. We shall be poor men.

Chamberlain—No one will give us gold for many days.

Zabra—Yet you will govern Thalanna while he is away. You can increase the taxes of the merchants and the tribute of the men that till the fields.

Chamberlain—They will only pay taxes and tribute to the King, who gives of his bounty to just and upright men when he is in Thalanna. But while he is away the surfeit of his wealth will go to unjust men and to men whose beards are unclean and who fear not God.

Zabra—We shall indeed be poor.

Chamberlain—A little gold perhaps from evil-doers for justice. Or a little money to decide the dispute of some righteous wealthy man; but no more till the King returns, whom God prosper.

Zabra—God increase him. Will you yet try to detain him?

Chamberlain—No. When he comes by with his retinue and escort I will walk beside his horse and tell him that a progress through the desert will well impress the Arabs with his splendour and turn their hearts towards him. And I will speak privily to some captain at the rear of the escort and he shall afterwards speak to the chief commander that he may lose the camel-track in a few days' time and take the King and his followers to wander in the desert and so return by chance to Thalanna again. And it may yet be well with us. We will wait here till they come by.

Zabra—Will the chief commander do this thing certainly?

Chamberlain—Yes, he will be one Thakbar, a poor man and a righteous.

Zabra—But if he be not Thakbar but some greedy man who demands more gold that we would give to Thakbar?

Chamberlain—Why, then we must give him even what he demands, and God will punish his greed.

Zabra—He must come past us here.

Chamberlain—Yes, he must come this way. He will summon the cavalry from the Saloia Samáng.

Zabra—It will be nearly dark before they can come.

Chamberlain—No, he is in great haste. He will pass before sunset. He will make them mount at once.

Zabra (*looking off* r.)—I do not see any stir at the Saloia.

Chamberlain (*looking too*)—No—No. I do not see. He will *make* a stir. [*As they look a man comes through the doorway wearing a coarse brown cloak which falls over his forehead. He exits furtively* l.]

What man is that? He has gone down to the camels.

Zabra—He has given a piece of money to one of the camel-drivers.

Chamberlain—See, he has mounted.

Zabra—Can it have been the King! [*Voice off* l. "Ho-*Yo!* Ho-*Yay!*"]

Chamberlain—It is only some camel-driver going into the desert. How glad his voice sounds.

Zabra—The Siroc will swallow him.

Chamberlain—What—if it *were* the King!

Zabra—Why, if it were the King we should starve for a year.

Curtain

ACT II

The same scene. One year has elapsed. The King, *wrapped in a camel-driver's cloak, sits by* Eznarza, *a gipsy of the desert.*

King—Now I have known the desert and dwelt in the tents of the Arabs.

Eznarza—There is no land like the desert and like the Arabs no people.

King—It is all over and done; I return to the walls of my fathers.

Eznarza—Time cannot put it away; I go back to the desert that nursed me.

King—Did you think in those days on the sands, or among the tents in the mornings, that my year would ever end, and I be brought away by strength of my word to the prisoning of a palace?

Eznarza—I knew that Time would do it, for my people have learned the way of him.

King—Is it then Time that has mocked our futile prayers? Is he greater than God that he has laughed at our praying?

Eznarza—We may not say that he is greater than God. Yet we prayed that our own year might not pass away. God could not save it.

King—Yes, yes. We prayed that prayer. All men would laugh at it.

Eznarza—The prayer was not laughable. Only he that is lord of the years is obdurate. If a man prayed for life to a furious, merciless Sultan well might the Sultan's slaves laugh. Yet it is not laughable to pray for life.

King—Yes, we are slaves of Time. To-morrow brings the princess who comes from Tharba. We must bow our heads.

Eznarza—My people say that Time lives in the desert. He lies there in the sun.

King—No, no, not in the desert. Nothing alters there.

Eznarza—My people say that the desert is his country. He smites not his own country, my people say. But he overwhelms all other lands of the world.

King—Yes, the desert is always the same, ev'n the littlest rocks of it.

Eznarza—They say that he loves tne Sphinx and does not harm her. They say that he does not dare to harm the Sphinx. She has borne him many gods whom the infidels worship.

King—Their father is more terrible than all the false gods.

Eznarza—O, that he had but spared our little year.

King—He destroys all things utterly.

Eznarza—There is a little child of man that is mightier than he, and who saves the world from Time.

King—Who is this little child that is mightier than Time? Is it Love that is mightier?

Eznarza—No, not Love.

King—If he conquer even Love then none are mightier.

Eznarza—He scares Love away with weak white hairs and with wrinkles. Poor little love, poor Love, Time scares him away.

King—What is this child of man that can conquer Time and that is braver than Love?

Eznarza—Even Memory.

King—Yes. I will call to him when the wind is from the desert and the locusts are beaten against my obdurate walls. I will call to him more when I cannot see the desert and cannot hear the wind of it.

Eznarza—He shall bring back our year to us that Time cannot destroy. Time cannot slaughter it if Memory says no. It is reprieved, though banished. We shall often see it though a little far off and all its hours and days shall dance to us and go by one by one and come back and dance again.

King—Why, that is true. They shall come back to us. I had thought that they that work miracles whether in Heaven or Earth were unable to do one thing. I thought that they could not bring back days again when once they had fallen into the hands of Time.

Eznarza—It is a trick that Memory can do. He comes up softly in the town or the desert, wherever a few men are, like the strange dark conjurors who sing to snakes, and he does his trick before them, and does it again and again.

King—We will often make him bring the old days back when you are gone to your people and I am miserably wedded to the princess coming from Tharba.

Eznarza—They will come with sand on their feet from the golden, beautiful desert, they will come with a long-gone sunset each one over his head. Their lips will laugh with the olden evening voices.

King—It is nearly noon. It is nearly noon. It is nearly noon.

Eznarza—Why, we part then.

King—O, come into the city and be Queen there. I will send its princess back again to Tharba. You shall be Queen in Thalanna.

Eznarza—I go now back to my people. You will wed the princess from Tharba on the morrow. You have said it. I have said it.

King—O, that I had not given my word to return.

Eznarza—A King's word is like a King's crown and a King's sceptre and a King's throne. It is in fact a foolish thing, like a city.

King—I cannot break my word. But you can be queen in Thalanna.

Eznarza—Thalanna will not have a gipsy for a queen.

King—I will *make* Thalanna have her for a queen.

Eznarza—You cannot make a gipsy live for a year in a city.

King—I knew of a gipsy that lived once in a city.

Eznarza—Not such a gipsy as I . . . come back to the tents of the Arabs.

King—I cannot. I gave my word.

Eznarza—Kings have broken their words.

King—Not such a King as I.

Eznarza—We have only that little child of man whose name is Memory.

King—Come. He shall bring back to us, before we part, one of those days that were banished.

Eznarza—Let it be the first day. The day we met by the well when the camels came to El-Lolith.

King—Our year lacked some few days. For my year began here. The camels were some days out.

Eznarza—You were riding a little wide of the caravan, upon the side of the sunset. Your camel was swinging on with easy strides. But you were tired.

King—You had come to the well for water. At first I could see your eyes, then the stars came out, and it grew dark and I only saw your shape, and there was a little light about your hair: I do not know if it was the light of the stars, I only knew that it shone.

Eznarza—And then you spoke to me about the camels.

King—Then I heard your voice. You did not say the things you would say now.

Eznarza—Of course I did not.

King—You did not say things in the same way even.

Eznarza—How the hours come dancing back.

King—No, no. Only their shadows. We went together then to Holy Mecca. We dwelt alone in tents in the golden desert. We heard the wild free day sing songs in his freedom, we heard the beautiful night-wind. Nothing remains of our year but desolate shadows. Memory whips them and they will not dance. [Eznarza *does not answer.*] We made our farewells where the desert was. The city shall not hear them.

[Eznarza *covers her face. The* King *rises softly and walks up the steps. Enter* L. *the* Chamberlain *and* Zabra, *only noticing each other.*]

Chamberlain—He will come. He will come.

Zabra—But it is noon now. Our fatness has left us. Our enemies mock at us. If he do not come God has forgotten us *and our friends will pity us.*

Chamberlain—If he is alive he will come. [*Enter* Bel-Narb *and* Aoob.]

Zabra—I fear that it is past noon.

Chamberlain—Then he is dead or robbers have waylaid him. [Chamberlain *and* Zabra *put dust on their heads.*]

Bel-Narb (*to* Aoob)—God is just! [*To* Chamberlain *and* Zabra.] I am the King! [*The* King's *hand is on the door. When* Bel-Narb *says this he goes down the steps again and sits beside the gipsy. She raises her head from her hands and looks at him fixedly. He partially covers his face Arab fashion and watches* Bel-Narb *and the* Chamberlain *and* Zabra.]

Chamberlain—Are you indeed the King?

Bel-Narb—I am the King.

Chamberlain—Your Majesty has altered much since a year ago.

Bel-Narb—Men alter in the desert. And alter much.

Aoob—Indeed, your Excellency, he is the King. When the King went into the desert disguised I fed his camel. Indeed he is the King.

Zabra—He is the King. I know the King when I see him.

Chamberlain—You have seen the King seldom.

Zabra—I have often seen the King.

Bel-Narb—Yes, we have often met, often and often.

Chamberlain—If some one could recognize your Majesty, some one besides this man who came with you, then we should all be certain.

Bel-Narb—There is no need of it. I am the King. [*The* King *rises and stretches out his hand palm downwards.*]

King—In holy Mecca, in green-roofed Mecca of the many gates, we knew him for the King.

Bel-Narb—Yes, that is true. I saw this man in Mecca.

Chamberlain (*bowing low*)—*Pardon,* your Majesty. The desert had altered you.

Zabra—*I* knew your Majesty.

Aoob—As well as I do.

Bel-Narb (*pointing to the* King)—Let this man be rewarded suitably. Give him some post in the palace.

Chamberlain—Yes, your Majesty.

King—I am a camel-driver and we go back to our camels.

Chamberlain—As you wish. [*Exeunt* Bel-Narb, Aoob, Chamberlain *and* Zabra *through door.*]

Eznarza—You have done wisely, wisely, and the reward of wisdom is happiness.

King—They have their king now. But we will turn again to the tents of the Arabs.

Eznarza—They are foolish people.

King—They have found a foolish king.

Eznarza—It is a foolish man that would choose to dwell among walls.

King—Some are born kings, but this man has chosen to be one.

Eznarza—Come, let us leave them.

King—We will go back again.

Eznarza—Come back to the tents of my people.

King—We will dwell a little apart in a dear brown tent of our own.

Eznarza—We shall hear the sand again, whispering low to the dawn-wind.

King—We shall hear the nomads stirring in their camps far off because it is dawn.

Eznarza—The jackals will patter past us, slipping back to the hills.

King—When at evening the sun is set we shall weep for no day that is gone.

Eznarza—I will raise up my head of a night-time against the sky, and the old, old unbought stars shall twinkle through my hair, and we shall not envy any of the diademmed queens of the world.

Curtain

Dover Beach

By MATTHEW ARNOLD

THE sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.
Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.
Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

The Great Boar of Birkatheli

THE Great Boar of Birkatheli had become a tradition—some said a myth—with the hard-riding and not over-numerous folk who formed the X Tent Club. Their country is tucked away in an unfashionable part of India, where the going is vile, and the pig few, fast, and ferocious. It is for this reason that the X Tent Club has never been the vogue, and the hard-bitten few who hunt there hope that it never will be. Still, there is no reason why the world should be done out of the true story of their Great Boar.

The X country has always provided a variety of sport which calls on its men to be prepared to ride anything—boar by preference, of course, but also hyena often, stag very rarely, lynx and wolf as a very rare exception, and panther as a painful necessity sometimes to be faced. For many of the X country beats hold panther. He is not, however, an animal that often faces the open, but when he does, and when chased by men on horseback with spears, he produces often a marked deterioration amongst the horses, and sometimes amongst the riders as well. A tiger has been met in a beat. But he, being not a resident in, but a traveller through, their country, was looked on by the X Tent Club as not on the menu, and was dealt with *à la carte,* being disposed of otherwise than by spear-thrust. I feel positive that they could have taken him on with the spear and made a clean job of him, but they are notoriously averse to notoriety; babblers are ever abroad, and some one might have babbled about it, and the X Tent Club might have become notorious.

Haunting every one, appearing when not wanted, invisible when most desired, truculent, evasive, subtle, the Great Boar of Birkatheli was ever with them—his death their great ambition. He had grown considerably during the last few years, and was now commonly described as being as big as a bull-buffalo—that is to say, some eighteen hands high, with tushes certainly not less, and probably a good deal more, than six feet in length. The more sober among the members, however, did not accept these dimensions as strictly accurate, but had no doubt that he was an immense and a terrible boar.

II

SEEN he had been literally by hundreds. He was the talk of the countryside, where he was given to hustling honest cultivators off their fields and mauling them as they fled. These men's voices died in their bellies when they described him. Scores of beaters, who had hurled themselves into thorn-bushes to avoid his onslaught, were also able to give detailed descriptions of him. They seemed to have viewed him, measured him, and weighed him with the extreme accuracy only possible to people standing upside-down in thorn-bushes. Lastly, he had been viewed by young spears, out for the first time, and these declared that he was "absolootly the biggest boar they'd ever seen," and this was very likely true.

All this counted for nothing, or next to nothing. The Boar, on such evidence, might well have been several different boars, or even sows, and of any size from that of a mouse upwards. But what did establish his existence as a real out-and-outer was the considered evidence of One-who-knew, and he was Dhanni Thakur, Tent Club shikari of over forty years' experience. Dhanni seldom talked, never exaggerated, and possessed legs of such immense size that the sight of them alone inspired confidence. For his were the stoutest pair of Indian-bred legs ever produced on that spindle-shanked Peninsula. And his shoes were of enormous extent, with one great leather tongue reaching halfway up his shin and another half-way up his calf, protecting the vast areas of leg from thorn and spear-grass. Now Dhanni, when asked about the Boar, merely replied that he was "a very heavy one." But he spoke the word "very" with a sharp intaking of his breath. He said nothing more, but it was enough. He never spoke uphill like that for ordinary things. He would make his reply standing with his immense legs slightly apart, his staff hooked across his back in the crook of his elbows—a veritable rock of a man, with a gentle smile and a slow, quiet *patois*. He had never, I believe, been observed to squat native fashion, his large calves and proportionate hams being in strong opposition to this posture.

Asked why the Boar had never yet given any one a chance, he coughed gently, and said nothing. His glance wandered for a moment towards two very young sportsmen, flickered, and then went out. But he said nothing more. Asked again, more privately, the same question, he named these two young persons gently and said that on two occasions not long previous each had had a chance, each had squandered it, neither had been aware of it. That one of them by an ill-timed movement had put the Boar back. That the other, by composing a sonnet to his mistress's eyebrow, had failed to see what passed before his very nose. That was what Dhanni implied, but not how he put it. What he said was: "The Boar walked out from the hill and across the plain, a mile wide. He then passed up the side of Sironja and over the top and disappeared. He passed within two hundred paces of the Sahib, who was alone. We on the hill could see both Boar and Sahib. The latter was looking towards the Boar, but was as one blind or dreaming. We shouted to him, but he took no notice. He was thinking perhaps"—here Dhanni coughed behind the back of his hand and made a slight deferential pause—"he was thinking perhaps—of a Meem (lady)." This for Dhanni was coming it pretty strong. Scarcely had we credited him with so subtle a knowledge of white men and maidens. But once he had probably gone a-courting himself, and we are told that in these matters colour makes no difference.

Rest assured, however, that the love-sick party was roasted to a turn over that business.

III

But a day came. It usually does, if these traditionally large and evasive boars which haunt periodically every Tent Club are not mere myths.

A party of trustworthy spears, somewhat behind time owing to the lateness of one of their number, were on their way to the place where spears were always posted for that particular beat. Not the Birkatheli beat, but one adjoining it. The beaters had begun their booings, and could be faintly heard a mile away. The party was just breaking into a canter to get to its stations, when the flat open ground some way in front of them spewed up an enormous boar. His identity as The Boar was not that moment realised. One moment the plain was bare, the next the Boar stood on it. He didn't stand long, for he immediately saw how things were. The word "Ride!" was at once given, but from the first the chase was a hopeless one. Quarry and pursuers, on converging lines, steered for the same spot on Birkatheli Hill. But it was obvious that the former must reach the hill, and probably be lost on its shaggy slopes, long before the latter could get on terms with him. And this he did, while the horsemen were yet some hundreds of yards behind. On reaching the hill the Boar had immediately disappeared, for here the scrub grew very dense. But by the time his pursuers came storming up to the slope, he could not have reached the top and passed over the crest, nor have moved far to a flank in either direction. His movements in either case should have been plainly audible. But there was no sound, and no sight of a boar. Of the four horsemen, one remained halted, one galloped to either flank, and one put his horse at a less difficult place on the slope, forced him up so far as he could go, and then flung himself off and gained on foot, and remained on, the crest of the hill. The four men were in communication with one another, and none of them could hear or see the Boar. The inference was a satisfactory one. He was lying up and they had ringed him. A little patience and they would have him moving again. Another party of three spears came up, and beaters with Dhanni at their head were streaming across to help. On their arrival, Dhanni stood for a moment at the foot of the slope and enunciated four pregnant words, which translated into English make three and a blank, "This is the ——." All then knew without further explanation that it was the Birkatheli Boar which lay within the cordon. When Dhanni had gained more breath, his first demand was for medical aid to be sent back to tie up two of his henchmen, whom the Boar had damaged ere he had left the hill and taken to the nullah which had led from the hill into the middle of the plain. It was on emerging from this nullah—quite invisible at a few hundred yards distance—that he had so suddenly appeared to the belated party of spears.

Operations were at once begun, and hopes were mountains high. It is ill tackling a boar, or anything that bites, from below. So the beaters were sent to the top of the slope, while one party of spears made themselves scarce at the bottom, and the others took post at the top. The hill-top being lavishly supplied with boulders, and some sixty men being now on hand to hurl them, that hundred feet of slope was literally torn with missiles from top to bottom and for a space to right and left of a hundred yards. Nothing hiding there could have endured it—or so it was supposed. After fifteen minutes the barrage was lifted. Nothing had moved. Yet so convinced was every one that the Boar must be there, that six spears now left their horses and scrambled along the slope as well as they might, crawling under bushes one moment and climbing over rocks the next. Every inch of the slope was not literally searched, but the six declared (wrongly) that there was nothing there. This verdict shook the conviction of everyone else that there was, and each now began to remember instances of boars who had simply vanished despite the best-drawn cordons. Gradually the conclusion was arrived at that either the brute had gone to earth like a wart-hog and then stopped himself in (this was the idea of his original pursuers), or that there had been some bungling which had enabled him to slip away before he was properly picqueted (this was the opinion of the other spears), or that there was magic about (this was the opinion of the beaters). Operations were, therefore, broken off, and beating continued in a desultory fashion. There was just a hope that they might still find him, but neither this nor any other boar would have been so accommodating—and so the day ended, blank and bleak.

Thus finished the first hunt in which the Boar had been plainly seen, perfectly recognized, and properly chased.

The damaged beaters had not been merely knocked over by the heedless rush of a startled boar, but had been deliberately stood over, and fearfully, though not fatally, rent by a vindictive fellow. After all, a fellow reputed as big as a buffalo and furnished with tushes not less than six feet long, must do something to justify his reputation. The wounded pair were borne away protesting to a regimental hospital. Much would they have preferred cow-dung and mantrums (charms) in their own residences to antiseptics in a clean hospital. To make sure against poison, each demanded that two companions should remain with him, and being of no caste whatever—being indeed swine-keepers and eaters —they demanded a special Brahman cook to prepare their food and nobody else's. This to protect them from defilement. Since they bled in the service of the Tent Club, both demands were granted. An attendant charm-merchant had also to be laid on, who spent his time in weaving spells and slaying dozens of black-cocks, with sprinklings and incantations. Thanks *solely* to these precautions, and despite a very able doctor's ministrations, the wounded men made a complete recovery, and no doubt later exalted the Boar to the height of an elephant with the tusks of a mammoth.

Dhanni scratched his head over the disappointment. A very long experience had taught him that boars are lost not through magic but mishandling. But on this occasion he was forced back on magic. He had witnessed the whole hunt from his hill-top, knew the parties concerned were not greenhorns, had noted their tactics on reaching the hill just after the Boar, and approved of every action they took.

IV

ONCE more the X Tent Club met, and it was the Birkatheli beat. This hill possessed a plateau-like top, perfectly flat and nearly bare, having the appearance, from a little way off, of good going—nice red-brown soil, a pleasure to ride over and fall on if a fall were thinkable here. But on nearer approach, the nice red soil turned out to be nice red boulders, lying loose without any earth between them, and so closely packed as to resemble from a distance a well-cultivated upland plain awaiting the oncoming of a rich crop. Yet despite the boulders, horses both could, and often did, travel over them with speed and safety. How I know not, for walking on foot was laborious and ankle-twisting work.

With the beat on top of Birkatheli, on this occasion as often before, rode a party of spears. The hill-crest ended all round in a very abrupt drop or scarp, meeting, a dozen feet below, the steep bush and rock-covered slope that ran down to the plain a hundred feet or so below. In some places the scarp was perpendicular, in some it was undercut. It was on these slopes that pig harboured, and it was out of these slopes that the beat was now endeavouring to turn them, and to make them leave Birkatheli and pass across some mile of open flat plain to the neighbour hill Sironja. The party of spears that went with the beat on the top of the former hill was there to take on odd pig that were lying on the plateau and not on its slopes, or pig which happened to prefer running across the plateau rather than across the plain below it. It was always on the plain that most sport was expected.

On that day, and by Dhanni's request, the beaters had been assembled not at the customary spot near the end of the hill at dawn, but on the night previous at a village two miles away. The beating was also timed to start at an unusually late hour. And there was to be no meet in the usual sense of the word—that is to say, no gathering of the spears and allotment of parties at the usual time-honoured tree at a certain road bifurcation; but these were to ride straight out from cantonments to their stations. In short, everything had been done to defeat the private information-bureau which the Boar undoubtedly maintained to warn him of a meet.

The party that rode with the beat on the hill-top consisted of two men only. Their selection had been a matter of some thought on the part of the Hon. Secretary. Finally, he had selected an old hand and a young one, both well mounted on old proved pig-stickers. Of the two men, the old hand was known to have his head screwed on the right way, and as the young one always rode with several spare necks, it didn't so much matter which way his head was screwed on. Thus was secured a combination of two virtues, recklessness and cunning, seldom found in one person. A really first-class goer after hog must have both. He may then hope to be in the final heat for the Kadir Cup, and if Fortune smiles very broadly on him, may win it.

At 11 A. M. the beat moved off, a few men scrambling along the slope of the hill, the majority bombarding it with stones and yells from above. The two spears moved near the crest-line, but a little way back from it.

At 11:10 A. M. the Boar lounged from under his lookout station, an umbrella-shaped tree knee-deep in grass and thorn, which commanded a view in all directions. At this moment the two horsemen were some fifty yards from him, saw him plainly, and at this moment also Dhanni clearly ejaculated three words in Hindustani, which make two and a blank in English— "That's the ——." The beaters precipitated themselves like sparks flying from stricken hot iron. The Boar looked at things, but not for long. As the spears made at him, hoping that he would meet this friendly overture, he disappeared over the crest. Two seconds later they arrived also at the crest, and looked down. The Boar could be heard crashing downhill, but between him and them was a twelve-foot perpendicular drop, which even the younger of the two men thought it wiser not to attempt. No matter for that. If the Boar really meant to quit the hill and make across the open, let him do it unhustled. Meanwhile a rapid search was made for a way down. This was soon found about a hundred yards back. Down they slid and scrambled, feet out of irons, and reached the plain right side up. The Boar could now be seen again, legging it away fast and a thousand yards from them. He had no intention of facing the open, but was bundling along the base of the hill, and looked as if he knew exactly where he meant to get to.

Birkatheli is a long hill, three miles from end to end. And the hunt had started close to one end, and was moving fast towards the other. The horsemen had galloped a mile before they had reduced the interval between them and the Boar from a thousand yards to five hundred yards. For a big fellow—and he was very big—he was speedy. The sugar-cane had, however, all long been cut and harvested; pig were on a low diet, and kept fit by having to range far to get it. The Boar was evidently in great running fettle, and looked like turning the eastern end of the hill and continuing along its northern skirts, or of holding straight on and making for the intricacies of a typical X country river-bed. One of the other he must do, or be run into. When the two horsemen were within a hundred yards of him, he solved the question by turning sharp into and up the hillside on his left. To be sure, they might have thought of that, but a very heavy, very blown, boar should avoid steep climbing. Within eight seconds his pursuers had reached the spot where he had turned up and disappeared. A glance showed that the slope, though possible to a man on foot, was not so for the stoutest-hearted horse ever foaled. The thorn-bushes were too dense and high, and some of the rocks were insurmountable. The spot, although the two men did not realize this in the heat of the moment, was that at which the Boar had been lost, as narrated heretofore, at a former meet.

At once they separated: one dashed forward, the other back, a hundred yards or so, and both kept their eyes on the crest of the slope. Anything to avoid losing touch with the Boar; and this at the present juncture could only be done by eyes or ears. There was not a doubt that he was between them, and had not passed over the crest-line above, nor far to right or left. It was now seen that the former alternative was impossible, for the scarp just below the crest was here undercut, and jutting over the crest itself like a bushy eyebrow was an abattis of thorn impenetrable even to the wedge-shaped ram which the boar calls a head. But, as on the former occasion, there was neither sound nor movement.

"Isn't this the place where we lost him before?" called the senior man. But his companion, hat off and hand to ear, was busy listening. He had caught an odd sound, something like that of a faint sawing. He moved back to the spot above which it proceeded. The Boar had turned in just here. The sounds were now much plainer, and came from under the crest, a hundred feet above him. They now sounded more like the breathings of a giant far gone in asthma.

He beckoned up his companion. "What d'you make of it?" he said. The answer came, "I make it that the old devil's up there and gone in the wind. That last bust did in his bellows." They listened again, and the sounds were convincing.

If a boar is to be taken on foot, it is best to do so when he is well blown. The two men tumbled off their horses, and running them to a tree, hitched them to it. Spurs were cast off, and then, spear in hand, they attacked the slope, steering by sound, crawling under bushes, climbing over rocks, on hand and knees. At last they came nearly to the foot of the scarp, and paused before a rock about the size and height of an ordinary font. From the other side of the rock came the sounds, very loud, very painful, and very alarming. Their farther direct advance was blocked by the rock, but round one side of it wound a little intriguing path and disappeared. This path passing between scarp and rock admitted the passage of one person only, and barely that. Both men looked at it—and swallowed.

They were crouched behind the rock and took breath and whispered counsel here. The older man was unhappy, the younger beamed. Both recognised the facts of the case. They were to be slayers of the Boar of Birkatheli, to lay the bogey of the X Tent Club, but they were to do it on foot and in a very nasty place. Between them and him lay this font-like rock, and round it lay this little intriguing path. The issue was lucidly clear. It was to be either over the rock or round, and the sooner the better.

But first to have a look over. This was easily done. The rock provided a breastwork, though their right flank could be turned by the path.

Raising themselves, they cautiously peered over the top. The sounds of the roarer, just on the other side of it, had continued and grown no less. They had seen a big boar running from them, and he had looked enormous even then. But what they saw now took their breath away. Within spear-prick of them, not spear-thrust, lying within a slight cavity in the scarp, his huge length sprawled at full extent, lay the vastest boar that ever was. On his side he lay, panting like a dog, roaring like ten horses all gone badly in the wind, and looking every moment larger and more awesome from his *négligé* posture and extreme proximity to his spectators. So thought they, and they thought wrong. He was to look larger yet and to come nearer.

From above he was, in this his secret lair, perfectly protected both from fire, view, and approach, by the frieze of dense thorns that projected over it. His front was hidden from view and well camouflaged or bafled from even a close scrutiny by the font-like rock. Alone the little track which he had worn for himself pointed to something being behind the rock. And this his searchers on the previous occasion had overlooked.

The scrutiny was quite a leisurely one. The Boar lay apparently dead to the world, too far gone to take notice of them. There was time to make and unmake two plans and to adopt a third. To leave one spear on guard, while another found his way up and collected men, was dismissed. Nothing could touch him from above. On the former occasion nothing *had* touched him, and the bombardment had been fierce. To pass in by that narrow path, one man at a time, and no room to wield a spear—that plan was gently put aside. The third plan was for one man to boost the other up on to the font, and literally to fall on him with the spear. But the roof of the cavity was so low and so close that even falling on him appeared a doubtful possibility.

Time was passing. The Boar might be foxing. He might stop those terrible noises and come out at them by his little sally-port; or make a dash for liberty down that slope. And down that precipitous slope would he go—some thirty stone of him. Nothing and nobody could stop him. This was a ghastly prospect—to lose the Birkatheli Boar through sheer funk to take him on promptly.

"Give us a leg up," said the younger man; and next moment he stood on the top of the rock. It was firm and flat, and by leaning forward while the other held him by the slack of his pants, he thought he could just reach the Boar so as to prick him. The question was, What would the Boar do when so treated? As no one could reply to that question, the answer had to be elicited by experiment. He leaned, and delivered a faltering dab. Some eighth of an inch of the spear-point went home in the thin-skinned, hairless, abdominal area.

A lighted match obtruded into a powder-barrel could not have produced speedier results. Really no one would have thought it of such a heaving, utterly blown animal. In a flash the Boar was up, and in another he was on his hindlegs with two fore-trotters planted on the rock. His great head made two swift sidelong sweeps, but his tushes met only thin and recently vacated air. He whom they sought was at that moment in space, and wondering what sort of landing he would make. For he had quitted as the Boar gained the rock; but in quitting he had thrust at his assailant's exposed belly, and the spear had gone home. He landed on a decently flat rock, rolled into a bush, and all parties then resumed stations. The matter now appeared perfectly simple. Only show yourself on the rock and the Boar would come again, expose his vital parts, and receive a mortal poke. But he didn't fall in with this plan. Nothing could make him respond. He just lay there, and his two assailants hoped he was petering out. But the Boar had always been a source of disappointments and surprises. He simply wouldn't come now, and he had a surprise yet in store. One man on the rock and the other below, they discussed him openly and to his face. They peered at him, did everything except take his temperature, or apply a stethoscope. Yet he lay and heaved and looked done-in.

A cold, stark, bleak fact now dawned on them. If the Boar wouldn't come to them, they must go to him—by the little path and in single file. That was the only possible way. There was some slight wrangling ere the senior man asserted his right to lead this venture, and the younger gave over the idea of a military funeral when juniors lead their seniors.

So holding his spear short, for there was no room to hold it any other way, the senior squeezed round the rock, and again faced the Boar.

What followed was a blur and a flurry, and can only be outlined in a general sort of way. The Boar may or may not have been petering out, but there was any amount of peter still left to run. In a moment he was on his feet again. A spear-thrust (believed to have been ineffective) was delivered. The spearman turned and fled. The Boar followed. The man couldn't go fast enough. The two emerged, with the Boar's forefeet planted one on each shoulder, and their two cheeks laid lovingly together. This only for the space of a moment. The ground did not permit of such endearments. The second man lunged in. None of them could keep their feet, and the trio rolled crashing down the slope.

When they had finished rolling, the Boar was found to be dead, the two men a trifle bruised and thorny, and one of them with his cheek smeared with blood—not his own.

Swiftly they got to horse, for a hot sun and funk had parched them speechless. And they rode in on their companions, who were wondering what had happened to them, but making a hearty breakfast nevertheless. These vain babblers, while the True Heroes drank and regained their speech, poured out their trivial footling tale of six boar killed that day—wretched mice, one of 32½ inches, one of 31, two of 29, one still smaller, and one that would probably cost some one a gold mohur. Under ordinary circumstances five rideable pig in one day would have been marked with a red letter in the annals of the X Tent Club, whose total bag for a year seldom exceeded and usually fell short of thirty.

And so when these others had said their say, the two paladins gently broke to them the fact that they were late for breakfast because they had had business with the Birkatheli Boar, whom, after a slight affair on foot, they had killed.

Truth compels me to add that this announcement was received with what might have been called shouts of tipsy derision. But the X Tent Club drank nothing but tea. One or two of its more profligate members went in for limejuice pegs.

Drinks were not a common charge. Still the scoffers scoffed. They were, however, invited to come and see, and to bring Dhanni along as corroborative evidence. And when they arrived at the hill and had clambered up fifty feet and saw the Boar lying against a boulder, below a swathe of flattened bushes and broken saplings, they allowed that the half of the matter had not been told them.

The dimensions of the Boar and his weight were so great that I dare not give them here. Some faint idea of his size may be gathered when I say that when he was got down on to the plain and laid out reverently (no other word quite meets the case), Dhanni's legs receded from their position as principal features in the landscape, and faded away into mere pipe-stems.

Two spears were set up at heel and wither, and the Hon. Secretary solemnly placed on record the reading of the tape. The weighing-machine utterly failed to rise to the occasion, and this part of the obsequies had to be deferred till another had been procured.

Eight men staggered away with their burden, trussed up to a young tree which had been cut down for the purpose. Eight more relieved them, and so to the road, where a cart was impressed.

His two slayers fell into a brisk argument as to whom the tushes should go. He who had poked him when the Boar had mounted the font said that it was only a prick, and could not be counted. He who had staggered from the den in that bloody embrace maintained that he had shut both his eyes, and thrust in self-defence, and had probably missed. They agreed that the Boar had actually died of lung trouble rather than spear-thrusts; and the trophies were shared, a tush and a trotter going to each, and the head to the mess, of which each was a member.

All this happened in those far-away times classed as "pre-war," and I do not think the Tent Club will mind the yarn being told now.

Song

By J. WING

Translated from the Chinese by E. Powys Mathers

YOU would climb after nectarines
    In your little green jacket and puffy white trousers;
So that you fell and I caught you—
You made as if to break away,
And then settled snuggling in my arms,
All your lightness and softness were pressed against me,
And your face looked up from my breast
Puckered with amusement.

It would be something of the sort
If our clear blue night full of white stars
Turned to a night of coloured stars—
Red and purple and green to the zenith,
And orange and light violet and lemon,
And bright rose and crimson all about the sky.

Djoûmane

By PROSPER MÉRIMÉE

P. Mérimée

ON THE 21st of May, 18—, we returned to Tlemcen. The expedition had been a fortunate one: we brought back oxen, sheep, goats, prisoners and hostages.

After a thirty-seven days' campaign, or rather of incessant hunt, our horses were thin and lean-ribbed, but their eyes were still lively and full of fire; not one was saddle-galled. We men were bronzed by the sun, our hair was long, our cross-belts were dirty, and our waistcoats were worn to threads; we all presented that appearance of indifference to danger and hardship which characterizes the true soldier.

What general would not have chosen our light cavalry for a battle-charge rather than the smartest of squadrons all decked out in new clothes?

Since morning I had thought of all the little pleasures that awaited me.

Now I should sleep in my iron bedstead, after having slept for thirty-seven nights on a square of oilcloth. I should sit on a chair to take my dinner, and should have as much soft bread and salt as I liked. Next I wondered to myself whether Mademoiselle Coucha would wear a pomegranate flower or jessamine in her hair, and if she had kept the vows made when I left; but, faithful or inconstant, I knew she could reckon on the great depth of tenderness that a man brings home from the wilds. There was not anyone in our squadron who had not made plans for the evening.

The colonel received us in a most fatherly manner, and even told us he was satisfied with us; then he took our commanding officer aside and for five minutes, and low tones, communicated to him some not very agreeable intelligence, so far as we could judge from their expressions.

We noticed the movements of the colonel's moustaches, which rose up to his eyebrows, whilst those of the commandant fell, piteously out of curl, almost on to his breast. A young trooper, whom I pretended not to hear, maintained that the commandant's nose stretched as far as one could see; but very soon ours lengthened too, for the commandant came to tell us to "Go and feed your horses, and be ready to set off at sunset! The officers will dine with the colonel at five o'clock, in the open; the horses must be mounted after the coffee. . . . Is it possible that you are not pleased at this, gentlemen? . . . "

It did not suit us, and we saluted in silence, inwardly sending him to all the devils we could think of, and the colonel into the bargain.

We had very little time in which to make our small preparations. I hurried to change my clothes, and, when I had done this, I was wise enough not to sit in my easy-chair, for fear I should fall asleep.

At five o'clock I went to the colonel's. He lived in a large Moorish house. I found the open court filled with French and natives, all crowding round a band of pilgrims or mountebanks who had come from the South.

An old man conducted the performance; he was as ugly as a monkey and half naked under his burnous, which was full of holes. His skin was the colour of chocolate made of water; he was tattooed all over with scars; his hair was frizzy and so matted that from a distance one might have thought he had a bearskin cap on his head; and his beard was white and bristly.

He was reputed to be a great saint and a great wizard.

In front of him an orchestra, composed of two flutes and three tambourines, made an infernal din, worthy of the performance about to be played. He said that he had received complete sway over demons and wild beasts from a famous Mahommedan priest, and, after some compliments addressed to the colonel and the élite audience, he went off into a sort of prayer or incantation, accompanied by his orchestra, while the actors danced to his command, turned on one foot, and struck their breasts heavy blows with their fists.

Meanwhile the tambourines and flutes increased their din and played faster and faster.

When exhaustion and giddiness had made these people lose what few brains they had, the chief sorcerer drew several scorpions and serpents from some baskets round him, and, after showing that they were full of life, he threw them to his jesters, who fell upon them like dogs on a bone, and tore them to pieces with their teeth, if you please!

We looked down on this extraordinary spectacle from a high gallery; no doubt the colonel treated us to it to give us a good appetite for our dinner. As for myself, I turned my eyes away from these beasts, who disgusted me, and amused myself by staring at a pretty girl of thirteen or fourteen years of age, who had threaded through the crowd to get nearer to the performance.

She had the most beautiful eyes imaginable, and her hair fell on her shoulders in fine tresses; these ended in small pieces of silver, which made a tinkling sound as she moved her head gracefully about. She was dressed with more taste than most of the girls of that country; she had a kerchief of silk and gold on her head, a bodice of embroidered velvet, and short pantaloons of blue satin, showing her bare legs encircled with silver anklets. There was not a vestige of a veil over her face. Was she a Jewess or a heathen? or did she, perhaps, belong to those wandering tribes of unknown origin who never trouble themselves with religious prejudice?

While I followed her every movement with so much interest she had arrived at the first row of the circle where the fanatics carried on their exercises.

As she was trying to get still nearer she knocked over a narrow-bottomed basket that had not been opened. Almost at the same time the sorcerer and the child both uttered a terrible cry, and there was a great commotion in the ring, everyone recoiling with horror.

A very big snake had escaped from the basket and the little girl had trodden on it. In an instant the reptile had curled itself round her leg and I saw several drops of blood ooze from under the ring that she wore round her ankle. She fell down backwards, crying, and grinding her teeth, while her lips were covered with a white foam, and she rolled in the dust.

"Run! run, doctor!" I cried out to our surgeon-major; "for the love of Heaven, save the poor child."

"Greenhorn!" the major replied, shrugging his shoulders. "Do you not see that it is part of the programme? Moreover, my trade is to cut off your arms and legs. It is the business of my *confrère* down below there to cure girls who are bitten by snakes."

In the meantime the old wizard had run up, and his first care was to possess himself of the snake.

"Djoûmane! Djoûmane!" he said to it in a tone of friendly reproach. The serpent uncoiled itself, quitted its prey, and started to crawl away. The sorcerer nimbly seized it by the end of its tail, and, holding it at arm's length, he went round the circl. exhibiting the reptile, which bit and hissed without being able to stand erect.

You know that a snake held by his tail does not know in the least what to do with himself. He can only raise himself a quarter of his length, and cannot, therefore, bite the hand of the person who seizes him.

The next minute the serpent was put back in his basket and the lid firmly tied down. The magician then turned his attention to the little girl, who shrieked and kicked about all the time. He put a pinch of white powder, which he drew from his girdle, on the wound, and whispered an incantation in the child's ear, with unexpected results. The convulsions ceased; the little girl wiped her mouth, picked up her silk handkerchief, shook the dust off it, put it on her head again, rose up, and soon after went away.

Shortly after she came up to our gallery to collect money, and we fastened on her forehead and shoulders many fifty-centime coins.

This ended the performance, and we sat down to dinner.

I was very hungry, and was preparing to do justice to a splendid Tartary eel, when our doctor, by whom I sat, said that he recognized the snake of the preceding moment. That made it quite impossible for me to touch a mouthful.

After first making great fun of my fastidiousness the doctor annexed my share of the eel, and declared that snake tasted delicious.

"Those brutes you saw just now," he said to me, "are connoisseurs. They live in caverns with their serpents as the Troglodytes do; their girls are pretty—witness the little girl in blue knickerbockers. No one knows what their religion is, but they are a cunning lot, and I should like to make the acquaintance of their sheik."

We learnt during dinner why we were to recommence the campaign. Sidi-Lala, hotly pursued by Colonel R——, was trying to reach the mountains of Morocco.

There was choice of two routes: one to the south of Tlemcen, fording the Moulaïa, at the only place not rendered inaccessible by rocks; the other by the plain, to the north of our cantonment, where we should find our colonel and the bulk of the regiment.

Our squadron was ordered to stop him at the river crossing if he attempted it, but this was scarcely likely.

You know that the Maulaïa flows between two walls of rock, and there is but a single point, like a kind of very narrow breach, where horses can ford it. I knew the place well, and I did not understand why a blockhouse had not been raised there before. At all events, the colonel had every chance of encountering the enemy, and we of making a useless journey.

Before the conclusion of dinner several orderlies from Maghzen had brought despatches from Colonel R——. The enemy had made a stand, and seemed to want to fight. They had lost time. Colonel R—'s infantry had come up and routed them.

But where had they escaped to? We knew nothing at all, and must decide which of the two routes to take. I have not mentioned the last resource that could be taken, viz., to drive them into the desert, where their herds and camp would very soon die of hunger and thirst. Signals were agreed upon to warn us of the enemy's movements.

Three cannon-shots from Tlemcen would tell us that Sidi-Lala was visible in the plain, and we should carry rockets with us in case we had to let them know that we needed reinforcements. In all probability the enemy could not show itself before daybreak, and our two columns had several hours' start. Night had fallen by the time we got to horse. I commanded the advance guard platoon. I felt tired and cold; I put on my cloak, turned up the collar, thrust my feet far into my stirrups, and rode quietly to my mare's long-striding walk, listening absently to Quartermaster Wagner's stories about his love affairs, which unluckily ended by the flight of an infidel, who had run off with not only his heart, but a silver watch and a pair of new boots. I had heard this history before, and it appeared even longer than usual.

The moon rose as we started on our way. The sky was clear, but a light, white mist had come up since sundown, and skimmed the ground, which looked as though it were covered with down. On this white background the moon threw long shadows, and everything took on a fantastic air. Very soon I thought I saw Arab mounted sentries. As I came nearer I found they were tamarisks in flower. Presently I stopped short, for I thought I heard the cannon-shot signal. Wagner told me it was the sound of a horse galloping.

We reached the fort, and the commandant made his preparations.

The place was very easy to defend, and our squadron would have been sufficient to hold back a considerable force. Complete solitude reigned on the other side of the river.

After a pretty long wait, we heard the gallop of a horse, and soon an Arab came in sight mounted on a magnificent animal and riding towards us. By his straw hat crowned with ostrich plumes, and by his embroidered saddle from which hung a *gebira* ornamented with coral and chased with gold flowers, we recognized that he was a chief; our guide told us it was Sidi-Lala himself. He was a fine-looking and well-built young man, who managed his horse admirably. He put it at a gallop, threw his long gun up in the air and caught it again, shouting at us unintelligible terms of defiance.

The days of chivalry are over, and Wagner called for a gun to *take the marabout down a peg*, as he called it; but I objected, yet, so that it should not be said that the French refused to fight at close quarters with an Arab, I asked the commandant for leave to go through the ford and cross swords with Sidi-Lala. Permission was granted me, and I was soon over the river where the enemy's chief was trotting a little way off, and taking stock of things.

Directly he saw I was across he ran upon me and aimed with his gun.

"Take care!" cried Wagner.

I am rarely afraid of a horseman's shot, and after the tricks he had just played with it I thought that Sidi-Lala's gun could not be in a condition to fire. And in fact he pulled the trigger when he was only three paces from me, but the gun missed fire, as I had expected. Still he turned his horse round so rapidly that instead of planting my sabre in his breast I only caught his floating burnous.

But I pressed him close, keeping him always on my right and beating him back, whether he was willing or not, towards the steep declivities which edged the river. He tried in vain to turn aside, but I pressed him closer and closer. After several moments of frantic effort, suddenly I saw his horse rear and the rider drew rein with both hands. Without stopping to ask myself why he made such a strange movement I was on him like a shot, and I pierced him with my blade, right in the centre of his back, my horse's hoof striking his left thigh at the same time. Man and horse disappeared, and my mare and I fell after them.

Without perceiving it we had reached the edge of a precipice and were hurled over it. . . . While I was yet in the air—so rapid is thought!—I remembered that the body of the Arab would break my fall. I could distinctly see under me a white burnous with a large red patch on it, and I should fall on it, head or tail.

It was not such a terrible leap as I feared, thanks to the water being high; I went in over head and ears and sputtered for an instant quite stunned, and I do not know quite how I found myself standing in the middle of the tall reeds at the river's edge.

I knew nothing of what had become of Sidi-Lala and the horses. I was dripping and shivering in the mud, between two walls of rock. I took a few steps forward, hoping to find a place where the declivity was less steep; but the further I advanced the more abrupt and inaccessible it looked.

Suddenly I heard above my head the sound of horses' hoofs and the jangling of sabres against stirrups and spurs; it was evidently our squadron. I wanted to cry out, but not a sound would come out of my throat; I must, in my fall, have broken my ribs.

Imagine the situation I was in. I heard the voices of our men and recognized them, and I could not call them to my aid.

"If he had let me do that," old Wagner was saying, "he would have lived to be made colonel."

The sound soon lessened and died away, and I heard it no more.

Above my head hung a great branch, and I hoped by seizing this to hoist myself up above the banks of the river. With a desperate effort I sprang up, and . . . crack! . . . the branch twisted and escaped from my hands with a frightful hissing. . . . It was an enormous snake. . . .

I fell into the water; the serpent glided between my legs and shot into the river, where it seemed to leave a trail of fire. . . .

A moment later I had regained my *sang-froid*, and the fire-light had not disappeared: it still trembled on the water. I saw it was the reflection from a torch. A score of steps from me a woman was filling a pitcher at the river with one hand, and in the other she held a lighted piece of resined wood. She had no idea I was there; she placed the pitcher coolly upon her head, and, torch in hand, disappeared among the rushes. I followed her and found I was at the entrance to a cave.

The woman advanced very quietly and mounted a very steep incline; it was a sort of staircase cut out of the face of an immense hall. By torchlight I saw the threshold of this great hall, which did not quite reach the level of the river; but I could not judge of its full extent. Without quite knowing what I did, I entered the slope after the young woman who carried the torch, and followed her at a distance. Now and again her light disappeared behind some cavity of the rocks, but I soon found her again.

I thought I could make out, too, the gloomy openings of great galleries leading into the principal room. It looked like a subterranean town with streets and squares. I stopped short, deeming it dangerous to venture alone into that vast labyrinth.

Suddenly one of the galleries below me was lit up brilliantly, and I saw a great number of torches, which appeared to come out of the sides of the rocks as though they formed a great procession. At the same time a monotonous chanting rose up, which recalled the singing of the Arabs as they recited their prayers. Soon I could distinguish a vast multitude advancing slowly. At their head stepped a black man, almost naked, his head covered with an enormous mass of stubbly hair. His white beard fell on his breast, and contrasted with the brown colour of his chest, which was gashed with bluish-tinted tattooing. I quickly recognized the sorcerer of the previous evening, and, soon after, saw the little girl near him who had played the part of Eurydice, with her fine eyes, and her silk pantaloons, and the embroidered handkerchief on her head.

Women and children and men of all ages followed them, all holding torches, all dressed in strange costumes of vivid colour, with trailing skirts and high caps, some made of metal, which reflected the light from the torches on all sides.

The old sorcerer stopped exactly below me, and the whole procession with him. The silence was profound. I was twenty feet above him, protected by great stones, from behind which I hoped to see everything without being perceived. At the feet of the old man I noticed a large slab of stone, almost round, with an iron ring in the centre.

He pronounced some words in a tongue

unknown to me, which I felt sure was neither Arabic nor Kabylic. A rope and pulleys, hung from somewhere, fell at his feet; several of the assistants attached it to the ring, and at a given signal twenty stalwart arms all pulled at the stone simultaneously. It seemed of great weight, but they raised it and put it to one side.

I then saw what looked like the opening down a well, the water of which was at least a yard from the top. Water, did I say? I do not know what the frightful liquid was; it was covered over with an iridescent film, disturbed and broken in places, and showing a hideous black mud beneath.

The sorcerer stood in the midst of the gathered crowd, near the kerbstone which surrounded the well, his left hand on the little girl's head; with his right he made strange gestures, whilst uttering a kind of incantation.

From time to time he raised his voice as though he were calling someone. "Djoûmane! Djoûmane!" he cried; but no one came. None the less he went on making raucous cries which did not seem to come from a human throat, and rolled his eyes and ground his teeth. The mummeries of this old rascal incensed and filled me with indignation; I felt tempted to hurl at his head a stone that I had ready to hand. When he had yelled the name of Djoûmane for the thirtieth time or more, I saw the iridescent film over the well shake, and at this sign the whole crowd flung itself back; the old man and the little girl alone remained by the side of the hole.

Suddenly there was a great bubbling of the bluish mud from the well, and out of this mud came the head of an enormous snake, of livid grey colour, with phosphorescent eyes. . . .

Involuntarily I leapt backwards. I heard a little cry and the sound of some heavy body falling into the water. . . .

When perhaps a tenth of a second later I again looked below I saw the sorcerer stood alone by the well-side; the water was still bubbling, and in the middle of what remained of the iridescent scum there floated the kerchief which had covered the little girl's hair. . . .

Already the stone was being moved, and it glided into its place over the aperture of the horrible gulf. Then all the torches were simultaneously extinguished, and I remained in darkness in the midst of such a profound silence that I could distinctly hear my own heart beat. . . .

When I had recovered a little from this ghastly scene I wanted to quit the cavern, vowing that if I succeeded in rejoining my comrades, I would return to exterminate the abominable denizens of those quarters, men and serpents.

But the pressing question was how to find my way out. I had come, I believed, a hundred feet into the cave, keeping the rock wall on my right.

I turned half round, but saw no light which might indicate the entrance to the cavern; furthermore, it did not extend in a straight line, and, besides, I had climbed up all the time from the river's edge. I groped along the rock with my left hand, and sounded the ground with the sword which I held in my right, advancing slowly and cautiously. For a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes . . . possibly for half an hour, I walked without being able to find the way I came in.

I was seized with apprehension. Had I entered unconsciously some side gallery instead of returning the way I had at first taken . . .?

I went on all the time groping along the rock, when in place of the cold stone I felt a curtain, which yielded to my touch and let out a ray of light. Redoubling my precaution, I drew the curtain noiselessly aside and found myself in a little passage which led to a well-lighted room. The door was open, and I saw that the room was hung with silk tapestry, embroidered with flowers and gold. I noticed a Turkey carpet and the end of a velvet-covered divan. On the carpet was a narghile of silver and several perfume-burners. In short, it was an apartment sumptuously furnished in Arabian taste.

I approached with stealthy tread till I reached the door; a young woman squatted on the divan, and near her was a little low table of inlaid wood, which held a large silver-gilt tray full of cups and flagons and bouquets of flowers.

On entering this subterranean boudoir I felt quite intoxicated by the most exquisite perfume.

Everything in this retreat breathed voluptuousness; on every side I saw the glitter of gold and sumptuous materials, and varied colourings and rare flowers. The young woman did not notice me at first; she held her head down and fingered the yellow amber beads of a long necklace, absorbed in meditation. She was divinely beautiful. Her features were like those of the unfortunate child I had seen below, but more finely formed, more regular and more voluptuous. She was as black as a raven's wing, and her hair was

"Long as are the robes of a king."

It fell over her shoulders to the divan and almost to the carpet under her feet. A gown of transparent silk in broad stripes showed her splendid arms and neck. A bodice of velvet braided with gold enclosed her figure, and her short blue satin knickerbockers revealed a marvellously tiny foot, from which hung a gold-worked Turkish slipper which she danced up and down gracefully and whimsically.

My boots creaked, and she raised her head and saw me.

Without being disturbed or showing the least surprise at seeing a stranger with a sword in his hand in her room, she clapped her hands gleefully and beckoned me to come nearer. I saluted her by placing my hand first on my heart and then on my head to show her I was acquainted with Mahommedan etiquette. She smiled, and with both hands she put aside her hair which covered the divan—this was to tell me to take a seat by her side. I thought all the spices of Araby pervaded those beautiful locks.

I modestly seated myself at the extreme end of the divan, inwardly vowing I would very soon go much nearer to her. She took a cup from the tray, and holding it by the filigree handle she poured out some frothed coffee, and after touching it lightly with her lips she offered it to me.

"Ah, Roumi! Roumi . . .!" she said. "Shall we not kill the vermin, lieutenant . . .?"

At these words I opened my eyes as wide as a carriage entrance. This young lady had enormous moustaches, and was the living image of Quartermaster Wagner. . . . And it was indeed Wagner who stood over me with a cup of coffee, whilst, pillowed on my horse's neck, I stared at him wildly.

"It appears we have *pioncé*, all the same, lieutenant. We are at the ford, and the coffee is boiling."

Riding by Moonlight

By an Unknown Chinese Poet
of the Sung Period, 960-1206 A.D.

Translated by L. Cranmer-Byng

FROM the tall hill-top some great star
Falls to the west afar and afar.

Out of the glistening gorge below
The orient moon swims full and slow.

Hair dishevelled and sleeves blown wide,
Into the kind cool night I ride.

Faint winds free strange scents anew,
Moon-paled maples bright with dew,

Dripping dreams from bough to bough,
Sigh to my lute, Why sleepest thou?

Hands on the waiting strings fall mute,
Low my heart answers—"I am the lute."

The Athletic Lady of the Eighteenth Century

By DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON

Sam: Johnson

Being Number 6
of "The Idler" for
May 20, 1758.

"A noble woman is a storehouse of virtue."
EURIPIDES.

THE lady who had undertaken to ride on one horse a thousand miles, in a thousand hours, has completed her journey in little more than two-thirds of the time stipulated, and was conducted through the last mile with triumphal honours. Acclamation shouted before her, and all the flowers of the spring were scattered in her way.

Every heart ought to rejoice when true merit is distinguished with public notice. I am far from wishing either to the Amazon or her horse any diminution of happiness or fame, and cannot but lament that they were not more amply and suitably rewarded.

There was once a time when wreaths of bays or oak were considered as recompenses equal to the most wearisome labours and terrific dangers, and when the miseries of long marches and stormy seas were at once driven from the remembrance by the fragrance of a garland.

If this heroine had been born in ancient times, she might, perhaps, have been delighted with the simplicity of ancient gratitude; or, if anything was wanting to full satisfaction, she might have supplied the deficiency with the hope of deification, and anticipated the altars that would be raised, and the vows that would be made by future candidates for equestrian glory, to the patroness of the race, and the goddess of the stable.

But fate reserved her for a more enlightened age, which has discovered leaves and flowers to be transitory things; which considers profit as the end of honour; and rates the event of every undertaking only by the money that is gained or lost. In these days, to strew the road with daisies and lilies, is to mock merit and delude hope. The toyman will not give his jewels, nor the mercer measure out his silks for vegetable coin. A primrose, though picked up under the feet of the most renowned courser, will neither be received as a stake at cards, nor procure a seat at an opera, nor buy candles for a rout, nor lace for a livery. And though there are many virtuosos, whose sole ambition is to possess something which can be found in no other hand, yet some are more accustomed to store their cabinets by theft than purchase, and none of them would either steal or buy one of the flowers of gratulation till he knows that all the rest are totally destroyed.

Little, therefore, did it avail this wonderful lady to be received, however joyfully, with such obsolete and barren ceremonies of praise. Had the way been covered with guineas, though but for the tenth part of the last mile, she would have considered her skill and diligence as not wholly lost; and might have rejoiced in the speed and perseverance which had left her such superfluity of time that she could, at leisure, gather her reward without the danger of Atalanta's miscarriage.

So much ground could not, indeed, have been paved with gold but at a large expense, and we are at present engaged in a war which demands and enforces frugality. But common rules are made only for common life, and some deviation from general policy may be allowed in favour of a lady that rode a thousand miles in a thousand hours.

Since the spirit of antiquity so much

prevails amongst us, that even, on this great occasion, we have given flowers instead of money, let us at least complete our imitation of the ancients, and endeavour to transmit to posterity the memory of that virtue which we consider as superior to pecuniary recompense. Let an equestrian statue of this heroine be erected near the starting-post on the heath of Newmarket, to fill kindred souls with emulation, and tell the granddaughters of our granddaughters what an English maiden has once performed.

As events, however illustrious, are soon obscured if they are intrusted to tradition, I think it necessary that the pedestal should be inscribed with a concise account of this great performance. The composition of this narrative ought not to be committed rashly to improper hands. If the rhetoricians of Newmarket, who may be supposed likely to conceive in its full strength the dignity of the subject, should undertake to express it, there is danger lest they admit some phrases which, though well understood at present, may be ambiguous in another century. If posterity should read on a public monument that the lady carried her horse a thousand miles in a thousand hours, they may think that the statue and inscription are at variance, because one will represent the horse as carrying his lady, and the other tell that the lady carried her horse.

Some doubts, likewise, may be raised by speculatists, and some controversies be agitated among historians, concerning the motive as well as the manner of the action. As it will be known that this wonder was performed in a time of war, some will suppose that the lady was frightened by invaders, and fled to preserve her life or her chastity; others will conjecture that she was thus honoured for some intelligence carried of the enemy's designs; some will think that she brought news of a victory; others, that she was commissioned to tell of a conspiracy; and some will congratulate themselves on their acuter penetration, and find that all these notions of patriotism and public spirit are improbable and chimercial; they will confidently tell that she only ran away from her guardians, and the true causes of her speed were fear and love.

Let it, therefore, be carefully mentioned, that by this performance she won her wager; and, lest this should, by any change of manners, seem an inadequate or incredible incitement, let it be added that at this time the original motives of human actions had lost their influence; that the love of praise was extinct; the fear of infamy was become ridiculous; and the only wish of an Englishman was, to win his wager.

A Birthday

By CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI

MY heart is like a singing bird
  Whose nest is in a water'd shoot;
My heart is like an apple-tree
  Whose boughs are bent with thick-set fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
  That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these,
  Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a daïs of silk and down;
  Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
  And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
  In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
  Is come, my love is come to me.

The Pistol Shot

By ALEXANDER PUSHKIN

А. Пушкинъ

Translated by Prosper Mérimée

I

> "We fired at each other."—BARIATYNSKI.
>
> "I vowed to kill him, according to the code of duelling, and I still have my shot to fire.—*A Night on Guard.*

WE WERE in camp in the village of——.

Everyone knows the life of an officer of the line: in the morning drill and horseback exercise; then comes dinner with the colonel of the regiment, or else at the Jewish restaurant; and at night drinks and cards. At——, there were no entertainments of any kind, for no one had a marriageable daughter to bring out. We spent our time in each other's quarters, and at our evening gatherings there were uniforms only.

However, there was one man in our set who was not a soldier. He must have been about thirty-five and consequently we looked upon him as quite old. His experience had great weight with us, and besides his reserve, his grand air and sarcastic manner made a deep impression on us young men. There seemed to be something mysterious about his life. He looked like a Russian, though he bore a foreign name. In days gone by he had been in a regiment of Hussars where he was quite prominent at one time; but suddenly he had sent in his resignation, no one knew why, and had retired to this poor out-of-the-way village, where he fared very badly, while at the same time spending much money. He always wore a shabby overcoat and still he kept open house where every officer was made welcome. To tell the truth, his dinners generally consisted of two or three simple dishes prepared by his servant, an old discharged soldier, but the champagne always flowed. No one knew anything of his circumstances or his means, and no one dared ask him any questions on the subject. There were plenty of books in his house—mostly military—and a few novels. He lent them willingly and never asked for them again; on the other hand, he never returned those he borrowed. His one pastime was pistol shooting. The walls of his room were riddled with bullets, giving it the appearance of a honeycomb. A rich collection of pistols was the only luxury to be seen in the miserable house he occupied. The accuracy of his aim was remarkable, and if he had taken a bet that he could shoot the pompon on a helmet, not one of us would have hesitated to put the helmet on. Sometimes we talked of duelling, but Silvio (I will give him that name) never opened his lips on the subject. If someone asked him had he ever fought a duel, he answered shortly that he had, and that was all; he never entered into any particulars and it was evident that he disliked being asked such questions. We surmised that the death of one of his victims had left a blight on his life. Never for a minute would any of us have thought that he could have been guilty of faint-heartedness. There are some people whose very appearance precludes such an idea.

One day eight or ten of our officers were dining at Silvio's. We drank as much as usual, that is, excessively. When dinner was over, we begged of our host to take the bank in a game of faro. After refusing to do so, for he seldom played, he finally called for cards and laying fifty ducats on the table before him, he sat down and shuffled. We formed in a circle about him and the game began. When playing Silvio never uttered a word, neither objecting nor explaining. If a player made a mistake, he paid out exactly the amount due him or else credited it to himself. We were all familiar with his manner of playing and always let him have his own way. But on the day I speak of, there was with us an officer newly arrived who, through absentmindedness, doubled his stakes on a certain card. Silvio took the chalk and marked down what was due him. The officer, convinced that there was a mistake, made some objections. Silvio, still mute, went on dealing as if he had not heard. The officer, out of patience by this time, took the brush and wiped off the figures. Silvio picked up the chalk and wrote them down again. At this, the officer, excited by the wine, by the play and the laughter of his comrades, and thinking he had been insulted, took up a brass candlestick and hurled it at Silvio, who by bending aside, averted the blow. Great was the uproar! Silvio rose, pale with rage, and with eyes blazing:

"My dear sir," he said, "you will please leave this room, and be thankful that this has happened in my house."

Not one of us doubted the outcome of this fray, and we all looked upon our new comrade as a dead man. The officer went out saying he was ready to meet the banker just as soon as it was convenient. The game proceeded a few minutes longer, but it was evident that the master of the house was not paying much attention to what was going on; we all left, one by one, and returned to our quarters discussing the while the vacancy in our ranks which was sure to take place.

Next morning, while at riding exercise, we all wondered if the poor lieutenant were dead or alive, when, to our surprise, he appeared among us. We plied him with questions and he answered that he had had no challenge from Silvio, which caused us all much surprise. We called on Silvio and found him in his yard, firing bullet after bullet at an ace nailed to the door. He received us in his usual manner, never mentioning the scene of the night before. Three days went by and the lieutenant was still alive. We kept saying to each other: "Will Silvio not fight?" amazed at such a thing. But Silvio did not fight. He simply gave a very lame explanation and that was all that was said.

This forbearance on his part did him much harm among us young men. A want of courage is never quite forgiven by youth, for to him fearlessness is the greatest quality one can possess and it excuses many faults. Still, after a while, all this was forgotten and by degrees, Silvio regained his old ascendency over us.

I, alone, could never feel the same toward him. Being of a romantic turn of mind, I had loved this man, whose life was an enigma to us all, more than anyone else, and I had made him, in my thoughts, the hero of some mysterious drama. And he liked me, of this I felt sure, for when we were alone, dropping his sharp and sarcastic speeches, he would converse on all sorts of subjects, and unbend to me in a fascinating manner. Ever since that unlucky evening I speak of, the fact that he had been insulted and had not wiped out the offence in blood, worried me to such an extent that I never could feel at ease with him as in the days gone by. I even avoided looking at him and Silvio was too clever and quick not to notice and guess at the reason. He seemed to me to feel it deeply. On two occasions, I thought I detected a wish on his part to explain matters but I avoided him and he did not follow me. After that I never saw him except when others were present and we never again resumed our intimate talks.

Those happy mortals, who live in cities where there is so much to see and do, can never imagine how important certain small happenings can become in an out-of-the-way village or town. One of these is the arrival of the mail. Tuesdays and Fridays, the offices of our regiment were besieged with men. One expected money, another a letter, and again others looked for newspapers. As a rule, everything was opened and read on the spot; news was given and the improvised post-office was full of animation. Silvio's letters were addressed care of our regiment and he called for them with us. One day a letter was handed to him, the seal of which he broke hurriedly. While reading it his eyes flashed with suppressed excitement. None of the officers but myself noticed this, as they were all busy reading their own letters.

"Gentlemen," said Silvio, "business compels me to leave town immediately. I must go to-night. I hope none of you will refuse to dine with me for the last time. I will expect you," said he, turning to me pointedly. "I hope you will not disappoint me."

After saying which he went away in great haste, and we all retired to our own quarters, agreeing to meet at his house later.

I arrived at Silvio's at the hour he had named and found almost the whole regiment there. Everything he possessed was packed and the bare walls riddled with bullets stared back at us. We sat down to dinner and our host was in such a jovial mood that before long we were all in the greatest of spirits. Corks flew about; the froth rose in our glasses which we refilled as rapidly as they emptied. We all felt great affection for our host and wished him a pleasant journey with joy and prosperity at the end of it. It was very late when we got up from the table and while we were all picking out our caps in the hall, Silvio took me by the hand and detained me as I was about to leave.

"I must speak to you," he said in a low tone.

So I remained after the others went away and, seated facing each other, we smoked our pipes in silence for a while. Silvio seemed worried and there was no trace of the feverish gaiety he had displayed in the earlier part of the evening. This dreadful pallor, the brilliancy of his eyes and the long puffs of smoke he blew from his mouth gave him the appearance of a fiend. After a few minutes he broke the silence.

"It may be," he said, "that we will never see each other again; before we part, I wish to explain certain things to you. You have noticed, perhaps, that I attach very little importance to the average man's opinion, but I like you and I feel I cannot leave without seeing you think better of me than you do."

He stopped to shake the ashes out of his pipe. I remained silent and avoided looking at him.

"It may have seemed strange to you," he continued, "that I did not ask any satisfaction from that drunkard, that young fool R——. You will admit that, having the choice of weapons, he was at my mercy and that there was not much chance of his killing me. I might call it generosity on my part but I will not lie about it. If I could have given R—— a good lesson, without in any way risking my life, he would not have been rid of me so easily."

I looked at Silvio in the greatest surprise. Such an admission from him was astounding. He went on:

"As it is, unhappily, I have no right to risk my life. Six years ago, I received a blow and the man who struck me is still alive."

This excited my curiosity to an unusual degree.

"You did not meet him?" I asked. "Surely some extraordinary circumstance must have prevented your doing so?"

"I did meet him," answered Silvio, "and here you see the result of our encounter."

He rose and drew from a box near him a cap of red cloth with a gilt braid and tassel such as Frenchmen call *bonnet de police.* He put it on his head and I saw that a bullet had pierced it about an inch above the forehead.

"You know," said Silvio, "that I was in the Hussars of——, and you also know what kind of a disposition I have: I like to rule everyone. Well, in my youth, it was positively a passion with me. In my day, brawlers were in fashion and I was the foremost brawler of the regiment. To get drunk was then considered a thing to be proud of; I could outdrink the famous B——, celebrated in song by D. D——. Every day brought its duel, and every day saw me either the principal actor in one or else taking the part of a second. My comrades looked up to me, and our superior officers, who were constantly being transferred, considered me a plague of which they could not be rid.

"As for me, I kept on quietly (or rather riotously) in my glorious career, when one day there was transferred to our regiment a young fellow who was very wealthy and of good family. I will not name him to you, but never have I met a fellow with such unheard of luck. Imagine having youth, a fine figure, no end of spirits, a daring which was utterly indifferent to danger, a great name, and unlimited means to do with as he liked, and you may have a faint idea of the impression he created among us. My power was gone in an instant. At first, dazzled by my reputation, he tried to make friends with me, but I received his advances very coldly, seeing which, he quietly dropped me without showing any annoyance whatever. I took such a dislike to him, when I saw his popularity in the regiment and his success with the ladies, that I was driven almost to despair. I tried to pick a quarrel with him, but to my sarcastic remarks he answered with caustic and unexpected wit that had the merit besides of being more cheerful than mine. He was always in jest, while I was in dead earnest. Finally one night, while at a ball in a Polish house, seeing how much the ladies admired him, especially our hostess with whom I had been very friendly, I whispered in his ear some insulting remark which I have long since forgotten. He turned around and struck me. We grasped our swords, some of the ladies fainted and a few officers parted us. We went out immediately to fight it out right then and there.

"The three witnesses and myself reached the meeting-place and I awaited the coming of my adversary with no ordinary impatience. The sun rose, and its intense heat was being felt more and more every minute when I finally saw him coming in the distance. He was on foot and in his shirt sleeves, carrying his uniform over his arm—he was attended by only one witness. I went forward to meet him and I noticed that his cap, which he carried in his hand, was full of cherries. Our witnesses placed us twelve paces from each other. It was my privilege to shoot first, but what with passion and hatred blinding me I feared my aim would be poor, and to gain time to steady my hand, I offered to let him fire first. He refused to do so, and it was then agreed we would leave it to chance. Luck was, as usual, with this spoilt child of fortune. He fired and pierced my cap. It was now my turn, and I felt he was at my mercy. I looked at him with eagerness, hoping to find him at least a little uneasy. Not at all, for there he stood, within range of my pistol, coolly picking the ripest cherries out of his cap and blowing the pits in my direction where they fell at my feet.

"'What will I gain,' thought I, 'by taking his life, when he thinks so little of it?'

"A diabolical thought crossed my mind. I unloaded a pistol.

"'It seems,' I said, 'that you care very little whether you die or not at the present moment. You seem more anxious to breakfast instead. It will be as you please. I have no wish to disturb you.'

"'You will be kind enough to attend to your own business,' answered he, 'and to please fire, . . . but after all you may do as you like. You can always fire your shot when and where you like. I will always be at your call.'

"I went away with my witnesses to whom I said that I did not care to shoot just then and the thing ended there.

"I sent in my resignation and retired to this out-of-the-way village. From that day to this, I have thought of nothing but revenge. And now, the time has come. . .!"

Silvio drew from his pocket the letter received that morning. Someone, his lawyer it seemed, had written from Moscow that the *person in question* was soon to be married to a young and pretty girl.

"You can guess, I have no doubt," said Silvio, "who is *the person in question.* I am leaving for Moscow and we will see if he will look at death in the midst of bridal festivities with as much coolness as he did when facing it with a pound of cherries in his cap!"

After saying these words he rose and, throwing his cap viciously on the floor, he walked back and forth the length of the room like a caged tiger. I had listened to him without saying a word, stirred by very contradictory feelings.

A servant entered saying the carriage was at the door. Silvio grasped my hand which he shook with all his might. He entered a small open carriage where were two boxes already, one containing his pistols and the other his luggage. We said good-bye once more and he was driven away.

II

Years went by, when family matters compelled me to live in an obscure village in the district of ——. While looking after my interests, I often sighed for the enjoyable life I had led until then. The long solitary evenings of winter and spring were the hardest to bear. I could not become reconciled to their lonesomeness. Until the dinner hour I managed somehow to kill time by chatting with the starosty (Polish landowner), visiting my workmen and watching the new buildings being erected. But as soon as night came I was at a loss to know what to do. I knew by heart the few books I had found in the ancient bookcases and in the garret. All the stories known to my old housekeeper, Kirilovna, I had asked her to tell me over and over again and the songs of the peasants saddened me. I drank everything at hand, soft drinks and others, until my head ached. I will even admit that at one time I thought I should become a drunkard from sheer desperation, the worst kind of drunkard, of which this district offered me a good many examples.

My nearest neighbours consisted of two or three of these confirmed inebriates, whose conversations were forever interspersed with sighs and hiccoughs, so that even complete solitude was to be preferred to their society. I finally got into the habit of dining as late as possible and retiring as early as I could afterward, and in that way I solved the problem of shortening the evenings and lengthening the days.

About four versts from my house was a beautiful property belonging to the Countess B——. It was occupied by her steward, the Countess herself never having lived in the place but a month at a time, and that in the first year of her marriage.

One day, in the second year of this lonely existence of mine, I heard that the Countess and her husband were to occupy their residence during the summer months. In the early part of June, they arrived with all their household.

The coming of a rich neighbour is always an event in the life of country people. The owners of property and their servants also speak of it two months before they arrive, and it is still a topic of interest three years after they have left. For my part, the fact that a young and pretty woman would live so near upset me very much. I was dying to see her, and the first Sunday after they were settled, I walked over after dinner to pay my respects to the lady and introduce myself as her nearest neighbour and her devoted slave.

A footman led me to the Count's library and left to announce me. This library was large and magnificently furnished. Against the walls were shelves filled with books and on each one was a figure in bronze; above a marble mantelpiece stood a large mirror. The floor was covered with green cloth over which were thrown rich Persian rugs. Unused as I was in my hovel to any kind of luxury, it was so long since I had seen anything like this display of wealth that I actually felt timid and experienced inward tremblings while waiting for the Count, such as a country solicitor might feel when asking an audience of a minister. The door opened and a young man, about thirty-two years of age, entered. He greeted me in a most cordial and charming manner. I tried to appear at ease and was just going to make the usual commonplace remarks about being delighted at having such neighbours when he forestalled me by saying how welcome I was.

We sat down and his manner was so cordial that it soon dispelled my unusual timidity. I was just beginning to feel like my old self again, when the Countess appeared in the doorway and once more I grew desperately shy. She was a beauty. The Count introduced me and the more I tried to be natural and quite at ease, the more I looked awkward and embarrassed. My hosts, in order to give me time to recover from my bashfulness, chatted together as if to show that they considered me an old acquaintance already and one to be treated as such, so that while walking about the library I looked at the books and pictures. As far as pictures are concerned, I am no connoisseur, but there was one there that attracted my attention. It represented a Swiss scene, and the beauty of the landscape did not attract me quite as much as did the fact that the canvas was pierced by two bullets evidently fired one on the other.

"That is a pretty good shot!" I cried, turning toward the Count.

"Yes," said he, "and rather a peculiar one. Are you a pistol shot?" he added.

"Why yes, a fairly good one," I answered, delighted to have a chance to speak of something with which I was familiar. "I think I could hit a card at thirty paces, with my own pistols of course."

"Really?" said the Countess, seemingly much interested. "And you, my dear," this to her husband, "could you hit a card at thirty paces?"

"I don't know about that;" answered the Count; "I was a pretty good shot in my day, but it must be four years now since I used a pistol."

"In that case, sir," I continued, "I'll bet you anything that even at twenty paces you could not hit a card; because to excel at pistol-shooting one requires constant practice. I know this from experience. At home, I was considered one of the best shots in the regiment, but it happened once, that I was a month without using a pistol, mine being at the gunsmith's. We were called to the shooting-gallery one day and what do you think happened to me, sir? I missed a bottle standing twenty-five paces away, four times in succession. There was with us at the time a major of cavalry, a good fellow, who was forever joking: 'Faith, my friend,' he said to me, 'this is too much moderation. You have too great a respect for the bottle.' Believe me, sir, one must practise all the time. Otherwise, one gets rusty. The best marksman I ever knew practised every day, firing at least three shots before his dinner; he would no more have missed them than he would have omitted his cognac before dinner."

Both the Count and his wife seemed pleased to listen to me.

"And how did he shoot?" asked the Count.

"How? Let me tell you. He would see a fly on the wall. . . . You laugh? Madam ——, I swear to you this is true. 'Eh! Kouska! a pistol!' Kouska would bring one loaded. Crack! there lay the fly flattened against the wall."

"What consummate skill!" cried the Count, "and what was this man's name?"

"Silvio, sir."

"Silvio!" cried the Count, starting to his feet. "You have known Silvio?"

"Have I known him? Well, rather. We were the greatest of friends; he was like one of us in the regiment. But it is five years now since I heard of him, and you also knew him?"

"Yes, I knew him well. Did he ever tell you a peculiar thing which happened to him once?"

"How he received a slap in the face, one evening, from a cad?"

"And did he tell you the name of this cad?"

"No, sir, he did not. Ah!" I cried, guessing at the truth. "Forgive me, sir, I did not know. Can it be you?"

"Yes, it was I," answered the Count, in an embarrassed manner, "and that picture with a hole in it is a souvenir of our last interview."

"For God's sake, my dear," said the Countess, "don't speak of it—the thought of it terrifies me to this day."

"No," said the Count. "I feel I ought to tell this gentleman. He knows how I offended his friend and it is only fair that he should learn how he revenged himself."

The Count drew an armchair for me to sit in and I listened with the greatest interest to the following story:

"Five years ago we were married. We spent the first month of our honeymoon here in this house and to it clings the memory of the happiest days of my life, coupled with one of the most painful experiences I have ever had.

"One evening, we had both gone out horseback riding. My wife's horse became very restless and she was so frightened that she begged me to lead him to the stables and she would walk back by herself. On reaching the house, I found a travelling coach at the door and was told that a man was waiting in the library. He had refused to give his name, saying he wished to see me on business. I came into this room and in the half light I saw a man with a beard standing before the mantelpiece, still in his dusty travelling clothes. I drew nearer to him, trying to place him in my memory.

"'You do not remember me, Count?' said he, in a voice that shook.

"'Silvio!' I cried.

"And to be candid with you, I felt as if my hair were standing on end.

"'Exactly,' he continued, 'and it is my turn to shoot. I have come to fire. Are you ready?'

"I saw a revolver sticking out of his left pocket. I measured twelve paces and stood there in that corner, begging him to be quick about it, as my wife would return in a few moments. He said he wanted a light first and I rang for candles.

"I closed the door after giving orders not to admit anyone, and once more I told him to proceed. He raised his pistol and took aim. . . . I was counting the seconds. . . . I was thinking of her. . . . All this lasted a full minute and suddenly Silvio lowered his weapon.

"'I am very sorry,' he said, 'but my pistol is not loaded with cherry pits . . . and bullets are hard. . . . After all, come to think of it, this does not look much like a duel. It is more like a murder. I am not in the habit of firing on an unarmed man. Let us begin all over again. Let us draw lots to see who will shoot first.'

"My head was in a whirl and it turns out that I refused at first. Finally, we loaded our pistols and we put two papers in the very cap I had once perforated with a bullet. I took one of the papers and as luck would have it, I drew number one.

"'You are devilish lucky, Count!' said he, with a smile I will never forget.

"I cannot to this day understand it, but he finally compelled me to fire, . . . and my bullet hit that picture there."

The Count pointed to the landscape with the hole in it. His face was crimson. There was the Countess as white as a sheet, and as for me I barely suppressed a cry.

"I fired at him," continued the Count, "and thank God, I missed him.

"Then Silvio—at that moment he was positively hideous—stood back and took aim. Just then, the door opened. My wife came in and seeing us facing each other, threw herself in my arms. Her presence gave me back my courage.

"'My dear,' I said, 'do you not see that we are only jesting? How frightened you are! Go now, get a glass of water and come back to us. I will then introduce my old friend and comrade to you.'

"But my wife knew better than to believe my words.

"'Tell me, is what my husband says

true?' she asked of the terrible Silvio. 'Is it true that this is only a jest?'

"'He is always jesting, Madam,' replied Silvio. 'Once upon a time he gave me a slap, in jest; again, in jest, he pierced my cap with a bullet, and a few minutes ago, still jesting, he just missed me. Now it is my turn to laugh a little.'

"Saying which, he took aim once more, with my wife looking on. She fell on her knees at his feet.

"'Get up, Masha!' I cried enraged. 'Are you not ashamed of yourself! And you, sir, do you wish to drive this poor woman crazy? Will you please fire, yes or no?"

"'I will not,' answered Silvio, 'I am satisfied. I saw you falter. You were pale with fright, and that is all I hoped to see. I compelled you to fire on me and I know you will never forget me. I leave you to your conscience.'

"He walked toward the door and turning round, he glanced at the picture with the bullet hole and without aiming at all, he fired, and doubled my shot. Then he went out. My wife fainted—none of the servants dared stop him and the doors opened before him in great haste. On the porch he called for his carriage and he was already some distance when I recovered from my bewilderment."

The Count stopped.

It was thus I heard the end of a story, the beginning of which interested me much. I have never seen Silvio. It was said that at the time of the insurrection of Alexander Ypsilanti, he was at the head of a regiment of rebels and that he was killed when their army was routed at Skouliani.

Crabbed Age and Youth

CRABBED Age and Youth
Cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild and Age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee;
Youth, I do adore thee;
O, my Love, my Love is young!
Age, I do defy thee:
O, sweet shepherd, hie thee!
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM, 1599. [WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE?]

Perspective

Has there ever been a race, or a community, or a religion where the indigenous members did not look down with scorn upon all outlanders? Or an age that did not admit itself to be the perfect flower of Time?

Let us glance about the world—and while we smile, remember the common accent on a few terms of current American speech, such as chinks, dagos, wops, hunkies, greasers, kikes and the like. Not to mention "Perfidious Albion," "The Unspeakable Turk," and many another.

Starting at the bottom:

There is a tribe of jungle aborigines in the Malay Peninsula known as the Sâkai (meaning dog). They go naked, and have skin-disease, and sleep in hot ashes; their life is a succession of fears—of man, beast, devils; the Hottentot is civilized beside them: they are hardly to be distinguished from their ape companions as they flee away through the trees; indeed, one of their names for themselves is Orang Utan (jungle men).

Here is their *point of view:*

THE SÂKAI PRIDE

If there be one thing that the jungle-folk dislike more than another, it is to be called "Sâkai" to their faces and they are never so addressed by a Malay unless he wishes to bully them. The word, which has long ago lost its original meaning, signifies a slave, or some say, a dog; but by the aborigines it is regarded as the most offensive epithet in the Malayan vocabulary. In their own tongue they speak of themselves as *sĕn-oi*—which means a "man"—as opposed to *gob*, which signifies "foreigner," for even the Sâkai has some vestiges of pride, if you know where to look for it, and from his point of view the people of his own race are the only human beings who are entitled to be classed as "men" without any qualifying term. SIR HUGH CLIFFORD.

THE HAUGHTY HOTTENTOT

The Hottentots, as the Dutch called the more advanced race, in an apparent attempt to imitate the jabbering of those who called themselves by the prouder title of Khoi-Khoin, "Men of Men," occupied the best part of the land. (The Cape and Table Bay.)

W. E. GARRETT FISHER.

HOW THEY FEEL IN FIJI

Boasting generally attends upon pride, and in Fiji reaches to a very high growth. As among more civilized people, pride of pedigree is largely indulged; and should a native imagine that you are ignorant of his real origin, he will take care to fix it high enough, and support his pretensions by affecting to treat you as his inferior. . . . The ruler of a few little islands finds no difficulty in exalting himself above European monarchs, and designates any of their subjects who may live within his domain, as "his animals."

THOMAS WILLIAMS.

THE IMPURE FOREIGNER

Their (the Hindus') fanaticism is directed against those who do not belong to them—against all foreigners. They call them *mleccha*, i.e., impure, and forbid having any connection with them, let it be by intermarriage or any other kind of relationship, or by sitting, eating, and drinking with them, because thereby, they think, they would be polluted.

MUHAMMAD IBN AL-BIRUNI. (1030 A.D.)

IN CHINA

As for myself, when once in the family living-room and the invariable formalities of speech and salutation had been exchanged, I roamed about at my own sweet will, but was usually accompanied by some of the younger members of the family, who never seemed to get over their amazement that "an outside barbarian" could converse with them in the only language that human beings ought to use. JOSEPH KING GOODRICH.

EVEN THE CHOWS FAILED TO APPRECIATE "KULTUR"

In every courtyard were at least four to five chow dogs snarling at us intruders of their sanctuary. It is odd how these dogs know and hate Europeans, for I noticed they only snarled at us, never at any Chinese, of whom there were many coming in to worship.

COUNT FRITZ VON HOCHBERG.

WHAT IS A CONSTITUTION TO A TRUE BELIEVER

Whenever a dispute arises between the rival religions about a field, a woman, or a boy whose face has been slapped, the Nazarene applies officially to the Pasha. The Pasha lends an attentive ear to the complaint, quotes all the Hatts Shereef, Humayoon, and so forth, and exhorts the petitioner to remember that under a Constitutional Government . . . men of all faiths are equal. When a Mussulman proffers his counter-complaint, the same Pasha swears by his beard that no earthly power can make the Infidel take rank with True Believers. ISABEL BURTON.

THE TIGHT LITTLE ISLAND—WITH THE HEAVENLY ANNEX

. . . God hath given us a world of our own, wherein there is nothing wanting to earthly contentment. Whither go ye then, worthy Countrymen, or what seek ye? Here grows that wealth, which ye go but to spend abroad. Here is that sweet peace, which the rest of the world admires and envies. Here is that gracious and well-tempered government, which no nation under heaven may dare once offer to parallel. Here all liberal arts reign and triumph: and, for pleasure, either our earth or our sea yields us all those dainties, which their native regions enjoy but single. Lastly, here heaven stands open, which to many other parts is barred on the outside with ignorance or mischief. BISHOP JOSEPH HALL.

THE EDGE OF THE PIT

Which things sureley, if God holde not his holye hand over us, and plucke us from them, will bringe us to a mere Turkishnes, and more beastelye blind barbarousnesse, as callinge ill thinges good, and good thinges ill. ROGER ASCHAM.

A DARING POET

It has always been my thought, that heathens that never did nor without miracle could, hear the name of Christ, were yet in a possibility of salvation. JOHN DRYDEN.

THE MODE OF FRANCE

Nor shall we need the monsieurs of Paris to take our youth into their slight and prodigal custodies, and send them over back again transformed into mimics, apes, and kicshoes.

JOHN MILTON.

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE

It was a custome among the Jews when they travelled into any foreign country, to shake the dust off their feet when they returned home, lest they should pollute their own holy ground with the soil of a heathen country. GILPIN.

THE CHOSEN

For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth.
DEUTERONOMY.

AN AMERICAN COMMENT ON THE ABOVE

Odd,
That God
Should choose
The Jews.

IN CORINTH

Nor were the Corinthians proude only by reason of there welthe, but also because they were learned in the Grecian philosophy, and therefore despised they suche, as were not learned therein, as rude and barbarouse. NICHOLAS UDAL.

GREEK KING AND ROMAN "BARBARIANS"

Pyrrhus, seeing the Romans marshall their army with some art and skill, said with surprise, these barbarians have nothing barbarous in their discipline. DAVID HUME.

THE ZINCALI

"You are but a Rommany, brother," they would say, "and you feed gorgiko-nes (*like a Gentile*), even as you talk. Tchachipen (*in truth*), if we did not know you to be Mecralliskoe rat (*royal blood*) of Pharaoh, we should be justified in driving you forth as a juggel-mush (*dog man*), one more fitted to keep company with wild beasts and Gorgios than gentle Rommanys." GEORGE BORROW.

⁂

He made the mistake of thinking that his God was God. WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS.

◆

The great principle of the Roman senate and people was: It is for the gods alone to trouble about offences against the gods. VOLTAIRE.

◆

Forgive me if, midst all Thy works,
No hint I see of damning;
And think there's faith among the Turks,
And hope for e'en the Brahmin. THACKERAY.

◆

"Well, well, Brer Jack," said Uncle Remus, soothingly, "in deze low groun's er sorrer, you des got ter lean back en make 'lowances fer all sorts er folks. You got ter 'low fer dem dat knows too much same ez dem w'at knows too little. JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS.

◆

KEEGAN: There is a saying in the Scripture which runs—so far as the memory of an oldish man can carry the words—Let not the right side of your brain know what the left side doeth. I learned at Oxford that this is the secret of the Englishman's strange power of making the best of both worlds. GEORGE BERNARD SHAW.

Love's Labour Lost

By ALEJANDRO NIETO

THERE was no doubt. The tavern of Paco was well known throughout the whole countryside. The sign "Meles are sirved" and "Lickers" was prominent in front of the tavern. This was sufficient to infuse misgivings into anybody. For one could scarcely expect many culinary or courtly graces from a man who possessed so few orthographic ones. The villagers thereabouts, however, were imbibers of proven capacity, and it would have made very little difference to them whether the liquor had a "k" or a mosquito mixed in it. Therefore Señor Paco succeeded admirably in his business.

But at Señor Paco's tavern the goods dispensed were of minor importance. The best thing that establishment had was its grounds. Behind the hostelry itself there was an orchard, also belonging to the innkeeper. This orchard was separated by a small mud wall from a garden which, though by no means remarkable for its flowers, was remarkable for its mistress. The garden was attached to the house of Maria Antonia, the neatest girl in the village, a queenly creature. Her like, perhaps, may have been often met before by those well versed in feminine æsthetics, but to the people of the little village, she seemed the goddess Venus in human form. In truth there was considerable beauty in this bit of rural femininity, her strong and well-built form, her cheeks flaming with almost too much colour, but fresh and wholesome. Beneath these cheeks flowed the turbulent and burning blood of twenty summers. Hers was a face of rustic beauty that seemed to diffuse a perfume. Between her and city girls there was all the difference between the fragrance of the forest and that of a perfume shop.

Maria Antonia delighted in air and sunshine, sharers and protectors of her beauty. She used to spend almost every day in her garden. Señor Paco's orchard, therefore, was a strategic point of the utmost importance for a suitor of Maria Antonia. Therefore Señor Paco was not surprised when one day Joselito, son of one of those great Madrid families that used to pass the summer in the village, presented himself in the tavern. Calling him aside, Joselito said:

"Listen, friend. That orchard of yours behind the house can be of great service to me. If you will allow me free entrance to it whenever I desire, you will not regret it. You know who I am."

The tavern-keeper raised his shoulders and put his head on one side as though saying: "There is no need to speak of that. We all know that you are a millionaire."

Joselito drew out his pocketbook and threw upon the table a bank-note for a hundred dollars, saying:

"There is my card. Of course this is only the prologue. If you serve me well many papers like this will pass from my purse to yours. Is it a go?"

"No question about it. Come with me. I will show you how to get into the orchard so that you may enter from now on whenever you like, even though I should be absent."

They went along a path that smelled of old musty things, where the tavern-keeper kept the heaped-up remains of wine-barrels and useless furniture. As soon as they reached the door that opened on the orchard Señor Paco, discreet man that he was, withdrew, leaving Joselito a clear road to the heart of Maria Antonia. The rustic beauty was watering some pinks close by the garden wall.

The bargain for the little orchard suited the tavern-keeper admirably. Joselito was as good as his word. The bank-notes repeated themselves like enchantment.

Joselito called on Maria Antonia every afternoon. As far as she was concerned, however, the affair did not get beyond a semi-witty badinage, joyous, somewhat noisy, but certainly not at all serious. She permitted herself to be loved, she allowed herself to be admired, let slip a tender glance or an encouraging word, but nothing more definite.

Perhaps she was soon influenced by the fact that Joselito, although a millionaire, was as ugly as any common mortal, wizened, marked by smallpox, four fingers shorter in stature than she was herself, with an incipient baldness that seemed to the girl highly ludicrous. Impossible to love such a man! But why not pass the time listening to him! And pass it fairly well, too, for the mouth of her lover was a perpetual spring of compliments and tender phrases. What woman does not like to hear such things, even from the lips of a phonograph?

Soon, as often happens (but do not make a note of this, fair maids who read), the coldness and indifference of Maria Antonia fanned the flame in Joselito's heart from caprice into a real passion. Joselito put all his strength into making Maria Antonia love him. Maria Antonia for her part smiled and smiled, but would not surrender.

About this time there came to the village a native of South America, Don Santiago, laden with gold and posing as a conquering hero. In Matanzas, so he said, many women were languishing for love for him. No doubt the space taken up in his trunk by his money may have unduly influenced many hearts across the ocean.

He saw Maria Antonia and fell in love with her, or pretended to. Certain it is that, looking over the shoulder of Joselito and deeming him to be a rival beneath his notice, he decided to pay attention to the girl. But how begin? With the help of the tavern of Señor Paco, of course. That was the natural point of departure, the inevitable base of operations, the bridge which led to the region where reigned the rustic beauty. And thither went our fine gentleman.

"You will not, of course," he said to Señor Paco, "deny me entrance to the garden through your tavern?"

"But there is ——"

"There is another man who has this permission? I know that. For that very reason I can have it also. You will not regret it. The money that I have made in America dollar by dollar I know how to spend, when necessary, bagful by bagful. I will give you twice as much as that little fop."

"But.—You understand that I cannot now prevent Don Joselito's also entering——"

"Nor do I desire you to. Let him come or not. It is all one to me. Indeed, I do not look upon him in the light of a competitor at all. At what hour does he generally come?"

"From three to five."

"Then I shall come from five to seven. Here, take this as a proof of the kind of a man I am." And the South American threw upon the counter a bank-note for two hundred dollars. These disappeared beneath the hands of the señor in the twinkling of an eye.

The following day the latter said to Joselito: "You will excuse me, Don Joselito, but,—but—another gentleman, Don Santiago, the South American, also wishes to be allowed to pass through the orchard to talk with Señorita Maria Antonia——"

"And?"

"And since he pays well.—You see, I am poor, and business is bad, and one cannot despise chances to make a little money."

"As far as paying goes I shall certainly not be behind, and less than ever now that the little South American fellow dares to oppose me. Did he ask you to prevent my using the tavern?"

"No, señor, no. He says that it makes no difference to him whether you enter or not. He does not look upon you in the light of a rival and expects to supersede you quicker than a cock can crow."

"Did the jackass say that? Listen—neither do I care a straw about him. Let him enter the orchard at all hours."

"Indeed, I shall let him! Since, without depreciating anybody, Don Santiago is generous as a prince. He pays in a kingly manner."

"From today on I shall give you twice as much as he does. If that *parvenu* thinks he can outdo me—! Take this and see the kind of man Don Joselito is when it is a question of his dignity." And a bundle of bank-notes passed from the hands of the little gentleman into those of the tavern-keeper.

The lover's contest was prolonged for some time, for Maria Antonia lent ear to both and did not seem to lean towards either. Everyone in the village commented on the struggle. They made guesses, even bets, as to which would win in the extraordinary combat.

"In the end, Maria Antonia," said some, "will marry Don Santiago."

"Nonsense," replied others, "she is going to marry Don Joselito and that very soon, too."

These two phrases like two war banners divided the village from end to end.

"She will marry Don Joselito."

"She is going to marry Don Santiago."

In truth, however, Maria Antonia married the tavern-keeper, who had become rich at the expense of the little gentleman and the South American.

The Golden Ford

By HENRY WALLACE PHILLIPS

REDDY was on the station platform, walking up and down, looking about him anxiously. We caught sight of each other at the same time.

"Hi, there!" said he and jumped for me.

"Gad-dog your little hide!" he cried as he put my right hand in line for a pension. "I thought I was booked to go without saying good-bye to you—you got the note I pinned on your shack?"

"Sure."

"Well, there's time for a chin before the choo-choo starts—thought I'd be early, not savvying this kind of travelling a great deal. Darned if you ain't growed since I saw you—getting fat, too! Well, how's everything? I didn't say nothing to the other boys about pulling my freight, as I wanted to go sober for once. You explain to 'em that old Red's head ain't swelled, will you? Seems kind of dirty to go off that way, but I'm bound for God's country and the old-time folks, and somehow I feel that I must cut the budge out of it. 'Nother thing is I'm superstitious, as you may or may not have noticed, and I believe if you try the same game twicet you'll get just as different results as can be the second time—you heard how I hit it in the mines, didn't you? No? Well, that's so; you *ain't* seen many people out on the flat, have you? Hum. I don't know principally where to begin. You remember Wind-River Smith's pardner that the boys called Shadder, because he was so thin? Nice feller, always willing to do you a favour, or say something comical when you least expected it—had kind of a style with him, too. Yes, sir, that's the man. Well him and me was out in the Bend one day, holding a mess of Oregon half-breeds that was to be shipped by train shortly, when old Smithy comes with the mail. 'Letter for you, Shadder,' says Smith, and passes over a big envelope with wads of sealing wax all over it. Shadder reads his letter, and folds it up. Then he takes a look over the country—the kind of a look a man gives when he's thinking hard. Then says he, 'Red, take off your hat.' I done it. 'Smithy, take off your hat.' 'All right,' says Smith; 'but you tell me why, or I'll snake the shirt off you to square things.'

"'Boys,' says Shadder, 'I'm Lord Walford.'

"'Lord Hellford;' hollers Smithy. 'You'd better call somebody in to look at your plumbing—what you been drinkin', Shadder?'

"'Read for yourself,' says Shadder, and he handed him the letter.

"Wish't you could have seen old Smithy's face as he read it! He thought his pardner had been cut out of his herd for ever.

"'It's the God's truth, Ted,' says he slowly, and he had a sideways smile on his face as he turned to Shadder. 'Well, sir,' says he, 'I suppose congratulations are in order?'

"Shadder's hand stopped short on its way to the cigarette, and he looked at Smithy as if he couldn't believe what he saw.

"'To hell with 'em!' says he, as savage as a wildcat, and he jabbed the irons in and whirled his cayuse about on one toe, heading for the ranch.

"'Now you go after him, you jealous old sore-head,' says I. 'Go on!' I says, as he started to argue the point, 'or I'll spread your nose all the way down your spinal column!' The only time to say 'no' to me is when I'm not meaning what I say, so away goes Wind-River, and they made it up all right in no time. Well, Shadder had to pull for England to take a squint at the ancestral estates, and all of us was right here at this station to see him off—Lord! it seems as if that happened last world!—well, it took a little bit the edge off any and all drunks a ranch as an institution had ever seen before. There was old Smithy crying around, wiping his eyes on his sleeve, and explaining to a lot of Eastern folks that it wasn't Shadder's fault—gad-hook it all! He was the best, hootin', tootin' son-of-a sea-cook that ever hit a prairie breeze, in spite of this dum foolishness.

"'They can't make no "lord" of Shadder!'

hollers Smithy. 'That is, not for long—he's a *man,* Shadder is—ain't cher, yer damned old gangle-legged hide-rack?'

"And Shadder never lost his patience at all, though it must have been kind of trying to be made into such a holy show before the kind of people he used to be used to. All he'd say was 'Bet your life, old boy!' Well, it was right enough, too, as Smithy had nursed him through small-pox one winter up in the Shoshonee country, and mighty near starved himself to death feeding Shadder out of the slim grub stock, when the boy was on the mend; still some people would have forgot that.

"But did your uncle Red get under the influence of strong drink? DID he? Oh *my!* Oh MY! I wish I could make it clear to you. The vigilantes put after a horse thief once in Montana, and they landed on him in a butt-end cañon, and there was all the stock with the brands on 'em as big as a patent medicine sign, as the lad hadn't had time to stop for alterations.

"'Well,' says they, 'what have you got to say for yourself?' He looked at them brands staring him in the face, and he bit off a small hunk of chewing. 'Ptt-chay!' says he, 'Gentlemen, I'm at a loss for words!' And they let him go, as a good joke is worth its price in any man's country. I'm in that lad's fix; I ain't got the words to tell you how seriously drunk I was on that occasion. I remember putting for what I thought was the hotel, and settling down, thinking there must be a lulu of a scrap in the barroom from the noise; then somebody gave me a punch in the ribs and says, 'Where's your ticket?' and I don't know what I said nor what he said after that, but it must have been all right. Then it got light and I met a lot of good friends I never saw before nor since; then more noise and trouble and at last I woke up—in a hotel bedroom, all right, but not the one I was used to. I went to the window, heaved her open and looked out. It was a bully morning and I felt A1. There was a nice range of mountains out in front of me that must have come up during the night. 'I'd like to know where I am,' I thinks. 'But somebody will tell me before long, so there is no use worrying about that—the main point is, have I been touched?' I dug down into my jeans and there wasn't a thing of any kind to remember me by. 'No,' I says to myself, 'I ain't been touched—I've been grabbed—they might have left me the price of a breakfast! Well, it's a nice looking country, anyhow!' So down I walks to the office. A cheerful-seeming plump kind of a man was sitting behind the desk. 'Hello!' says he, glancing up and smiling as I came in. 'How do you open up this morning?'

"'Somebody saved me the trouble,' says I. 'I'm afraid I'll have to give you the strong arm for breakfast.'

"He grinned wide. 'Oh, it ain't as bad as that, I hardly reckon,' says he. He dove into a safe and brought out a cigar-box.

"'When a gentleman's in the condition you was in last night,' he says, 'I always make it a point to go through his clothes and take out anything a stranger might find useful, trusting that there won't be no offence the next morning. Here's your watch and the rest of your valuables, including the cash—count your money and see if it's right.'

"Well, sir! I was one happy man, and I thanked that feller as I thumbed over the bills, but when I got up to a hundred and seventy I begun to feel queer. Looked like I'd made good money on the trip.

"'What's the matter?' says he, seeing my face. 'Nothing wrong, I hope!'

"'Why, the watch and the gun, and the other things is all right,' says I. 'But I'm now fifty dollars to the good, even figuring that I didn't spend a cent, which ain't in the least likely, and here's ten-dollar bills enough to make a bed-spread left over.'

"'Pshaw!' says he. 'Blame it! I've mixed your plunder up with the mining gentleman that came in at the same time. You and him was bound to fight at first, and then you both turned to to lick me, and what with keeping you apart and holding you off, and taking your valuables away from you all at the same time, and me all alone here as it was the night-man's day-off, I've made a blunder of it. Just take your change out of the wad, and call for a drink on me when you feel like it, will you?'

"I said I would do that, and moreover that he was an officer and a gentleman, and that I'd stay at his hotel two weeks at least to show my appreciation, no matter where it was, but to satisfy a natural curiosity, I'd like to know what part of the country I was at present inhabiting.

"'You're at Boisé, Idaho,' says he, 'one of the best little towns in the best little Territory in the United States of America, including Alaska.'

"'Well . . .' says I. 'Well . . .' for again I was at a loss for words. I had no idea I'd gone so far from home. 'I believe what you say,' says I. 'What do you do around these parts?'

"'Mining,' says he. 'You're just in time—big strike in the Bob-cat district. Poor man's mining. Placer, and durned good placer, right on the top of the ground. The mining gentleman I spoke about is having his breakfast now. Suppose you go in and have a talk with him? Nice man, drunk or sober, although excitable when he's had a little too much, or not quite enough. He might put you onto a good thing. I'm not a mining person myself.'

"Thanks,' says I, and in I went to the dining room.

There was a great, big, fine-looking man eating his ham and eggs the way I like to see a man eat the next morning. He had a black beard that was so strong it fairly jumped out from his face.

"'Mornin', says I.

"'Good morning, sir!' says he. 'A day of commingled lucent clarity and vernal softness, ain't it?'

"'Well, I wouldn't care to bet on that without going a little deeper into the subject,' says I; 'but it smells good at least—so does that ham and eggs. Mary, I'll take the same, with coffee extra strong.'

"'You have doubtless been attracted to our small but growing city from the reports—which are happily true—of the inexhaustible mineral wealth of the surrounding region?' says he.

"'No-o—not exactly,' says I; 'but I do want to hear something about mines. Mr. Hotel-man out there (who's a gentleman of the old school if ever there lived one) told me that you might put me on to a good thing.'

"'Precisely,' says he. 'Now, sir, my name is Jones—Agamemnon G. Jones—and my pardner, Mr. H. Smith, is on a business trip, selling shares of our mine, which we have called "The Treasury" from reasons which we can make obvious to any investor. The shares, Mr.——'

"'Saunders — Red Saunders — Chantay Seeche Red.'

"'Mr. Saunders, are fifty cents apiece, which price is really only put upon them to avoid the offensive attitude of dealing them out as charity. As a matter of fact, this mine of ours contains a store of gold which would upset the commercial world, were the bare facts of its extent known. There is neither sense nor amusement in confining such enormous treasure in the hands of two people. Consequently, my pardner and I are presenting an interest to the public, putting the nominal figure of fifty cents a share upon it, to save the feelings of our beneficiaries.'

"'What the devil do I care?' says I. 'I'm looking for a chance to dig—could you tell a man where to go?"

"'Oh!' says he, 'when you come to that, that's different. Strictly speaking, my pardner Hy hasn't gone off on a business trip. As a matter of fact, he left town night before last with two-thirds of the money we'd pulled out of a pocket up on Silver Creek, in the company of two half-breed Injuns, a Chinaman, and four more sons-of-guns not classified, all in such a state of beastly intoxication that their purpose, route, and destination are matters of the wildest conjecture. I've been laying around town here hating myself to death, thinking perhaps I could sell some shares in a mine that we'll find yet, if we have good luck. If you want to go wild-catting over the hills and far away, I'm your huckleberry.'

"'That hits me all right,' says I. 'For what I don't know about mining, nobody don't know. When do we start?'

"'This, or any other minute,' says he, getting up from the table.

"'Wait till I finish up these eggs,' says I. 'And there's a matter of one drink coming to me outside—I may as well put that where it won't harm any one else before we start.'

"'All right!' says he, waving his hand. 'You'll find me outside—at your pleasure, sir.'

"I swallered the rest of my breakfast whole and hustled out to the bar, where my friend and the Hotel-man was waiting. 'Now I'll take that drink that's coming, and rather than be small about it, I'll buy one for you too, and then we're off,' says I.

"'You won't do no such thing,' says the Hotel-man. 'It's a horse on me, and I'll supply the liquor. Mr. Jones is in the play as much as anybody.'

"So the Hotel-man set 'em up, and that made one drink. Then Jones said he'd never let a drink suffer from lonesomeness yet when he had the price, and that made two drinks. I had to uphold the honour of the ranch, and that made three drinks. Hotel-man said it was up-sticks now, and he meant to pay his just debts like an honest man, and that made four drinks, then Jones said—well, by this time I see I needn't have hurried breakfast so much. More people came in. I woke up the next morning in the same old bedroom. Every breakfast Aggy and me got ready to pull for the mines, and every morning I woke up in the bedroom. I should like to draw a veil over the next two weeks, but it would have to be a pretty strong veil to hold it. I tried to keep level with Aggy, but he'd spend three dollars to my one, and the consequence of that was that we went broke within fifteen minutes of each other.

"Well, sir, we were a mournful pair to draw to that day. We sat there and cussed and said, 'Now, why didn't we do this, that, and t'other thing instead of blowing our hard earned dough?'—till bimeby we just dripped melancholy, you might say. Howsomever, we weren't booked for a dull time just yet. That afternoon there was a great popping of whips like an Injun skirmish and into town comes a bull train half-a-mile long. Twelve yoke of bulls to the team; lead, swing, and trail waggons for each, as big as houses on wheels. You don't see the like of that in this country. Down the street they come, the dust flying, whips cracking and the lads hollering 'Whoa haw, Mary—up there! Wherp! whoa haw.'

"And those fellers had picked up dry throats, walking in the dust. Also, they had a month's wages aching in their pockets. We hadn't much mor'n got the thump of their arrival out of our ears when who comes roaring into town but the Bengal Tiger gang, and they had *four* months' wages. Owner of the mine got on a bender and paid everybody off by mistake. You can hardly imagine how this livened up things. There ain't nobody less likely to play lame-duck than me, but there was no dodging the hospitality. The only idea prevailing was to be rid of the money as soon as possible. The effects showed right off. You could hear one man telling the folks for their own good that he was the Old Missouri River, and when he felt like swelling his banks, it was time for parties who couldn't swim to hunt the high ground; whilst the gentleman on the next corner let us know that he was a locomotive carrying three hundred pounds of steam with the gauge still climbing and the blower on. When he whistled three times, he said, any intelligent man would know that there was danger around.

"Well, sir, I put the Old Missouri River to bed that night, and he'd flattened out to a very small streamlet indeed, while the locomotive went lame before supper, and had to be put in the round-house by a couple of pushers. That's the way with fine ideas. Cold facts comes and puts a crimp in them. Once I knew a small feller I could have stuck in my pocket and forgot about, but when we went out and took several prescriptions together on a day, he spoke to me like this. 'Red,' says he, 'put your little hand in mine, and we'll go and take a bird's-eye view of the Universe.' Astonishin' idea, wasn't it? And him not weighing over a hundred pound. Howsomever, he didn't take any bird's-eye view of the Universe—he only become strikingly indisposed.

"Well, to get back to Boisé, you never in all your life saw so many men and brothers as was gathered there that day, and old Aggy, he was one of the centres of attraction. That big voice and black beard was always where the crowd was thickest, and the wet goods flowing the freest. 'Gentlemen!' says he, 'let's lift up our voices in melody!' That was one of Ag's delusions—he thought he could sing. So four of 'em got on top of a billiard table and presented 'Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep' to the company, which made me feel glad that I hadn't been brought up that way. After Ag had hip-locked the last low note, another song-bird volunteered.

"This was a little fat Dutchman, with pale blue eyes and a moustache like two streaks of darning cotton. He had come to town to sell a pair of beef-steers, but got drawn into the general hilarity, and now he didn't care a cuss whether he, she, or it ever sold another steer. He got himself on end and sung 'Leeb Fadderlont moxtrue eckstein' in a style that made you wonder that the human nose could stand the strain.

"'Aw, cheese that!' says a feller near the door. 'Come get your steers, one of 'em's just chased the barber up a telegraph pole!'

"So then we all piled out into the street to see the steers. Sure enough, there was the barber, sitting on the cross-piece, and the steer pawing dirt underneath.

"'He done made me come a fast heat from de cohner,' says the barber. 'I kep' hollerin' "next!" but he ain't pay no 'tention—he make it "next" fur me, shuah! Yah, yah, yah! You gents orter seen me start at de bottom, an' slide all de way up disyer telegraft pole!'

"One of the bull-whackers went out to rope the steers, and Ag gave directions from the sidewalk. He wasn't very handy with a riata, and that's a fact, but the way Ag lit into him was scandalous. When he'd missed about six casts of his rope, Ag opened up on him:

"'Put a stamp on it and send it to him by mail,' says Aggy, in his sourcastic way. 'Address it, "Bay Steer, middle of Main St., Boisé, Idaho. If not delivered within ten days, return to owner, who can use it to

hang himself." Blast my hide if I couldn't stand here and throw a box-car nearer to the critter! Well, *well*, WELL! How many left hands have you got, anyhow? Do it up in a wad and heave it at him for general results—he might get tangled in it.'

"It rattled the bull-whacker, having so much attention drawn to him, and he stepped on the rope and twisted himself up in it and was flying light generally.

"'Say!' says Ag, appealing to the crowd, 'won't some kind friend who's fond of puzzles go down and help that gentleman do himself?'

"That made the whacker mad. He was as red in the face as a lobster.

"'You come down and show what *you* can do,' says he. 'You've got gas enough for a balloon ascension, but that may be all there is to you.'

"'Oh, I ain't so much,' says Aggy, 'although I'm as good a man to-day as ever I was in my life—but I have a little friend here who can rope, down, and ride that critter from here to the brick-front in five minutes by the watch; and if you've got a twenty-five-dollar bill in your pocket, or its equivalent in dust, you can observe the experiment.'

"'I'll go you, by gosh!' says the bull-whacker, slapping his hat on the ground and digging for his pile.

"'Say, if you're referring to me, Ag,' I says, 'it's kind of a sudden spring—I ain't what you might call in training, and that steer is full of triple-extract of giant powder.'

"'G'wan!' says Ag. 'You can do it—and then we're twenty-five ahead.'

"'But suppose we lose?'

"'Well. . . . It won't be such an awful loss.'

"'Now you look here, Agamemnon G. Jones,' says I, 'I ain't going to stand for putting up a summer breeze ag'in that feller's good dough—that's a skin game, to speak it pleasantly.'

"Then Aggy argues the case with me, and when Aggy started to argue, you might just as well 'moo' and chase yourself into the corral, because he'd get you, sure. Why, that man could sit in the cabin and make roses bloom right in the middle of the floor; whilst he was singing his little song you could see 'em and smell 'em; he could talk a snowbank off a high divide in the middle of February. Never see anybody with such a medicine tongue, and in a big man it was all the stranger. 'Now,' he winds up, 'as for cheating that feller, *you* ought to know me better, Red—why, I'll give him my note!'

"So, anyhow, I done it. Up the street we went, steer bawling and buck-jumping, my hair a-flying, and me as busy as the little bee you read about keeping that steer underneath me, 'stead of on top of me, where he'd ruther be, and after us the whole town, whoopin', yellin', crackin' off six-shooters, and carryin' on wild.

"Then we had twenty-five dollars and was as good as anybody. But it didn't last long. The tin-horns come out after pay-day, like hop-toads after a rain. 'Twould puzzle the Government at Washington to know where they hang out in the meantime. There was one lad had a face on him with about as much expression as a hotel pumpkin pie. He run an arrow game, and he talked right straight along in a voice that had no more bends in it than a billiard cue.

"'Here's where you get your three for one any child may do it no chance to lose make your bets while the arrow of fortune swings all gents accommodated in amounts from two-bits to double-eagles and bets paid on the nail,' says he.

"'Red,' says Aggy, 'I can double our pile right here—let me have the money. I know this game.' You'd hardly believe it, but I dug up. 'Double-or-quits?' says he to the dealer.

"'Let her go,' says the dealer; the arrow swung around. 'Quits,' says the dealer, and raked in my dough. It was all over in one second.

"I grabbed Aggy by the shoulder and took him in the corner for a private talk. 'I thought you knew this game?' says I.

"'I do,' says he. 'That's the way it always happens.' And once more in my life I experienced the peculiar feeling of being altogether at a loss for words.

"'Aggy,' says I at last, 'I've got a good notion to lay two violent hands on you, and wind you up like an eight-day clock, but rather than make hard feelings between friends, I'll refrain. Besides you are a funny cuss, that's sure. One thing, boy, you can mark down. We leave here to-morrow morning.'

"'All right,' says Ag. 'This sporting life is the very devil. I like out doors as well as the next man, when I get there.'

"So the morrow morning, away we went. All we had for kit was the picks, shovels, and pans; the rest of our belongings was staying with the Hotel-man until we made a rise.

"Ag said he'd be cussed if he'd walk. A

hundred and fifty miles of a stroll was too many.

"'But we ain't got a cent to pay the stage fare,' says I.

"'Borrow it of Uncle Hotel-keep,' says he.

"'Not by a town site,' says I. 'We owe him all we're going to, at this very minute—you'll have to hoof it, that's all.'

"'I tell you I won't. I don't like to have anybody walk on my feet, not even myself. I can stand off that stage driver so easy, that you'll wonder I don't take it up as a profession. Now, don't raise any more objections—please don't,' says he. 'I can't tell you how nervous you make me, always finding some fault with everything I try to do. That's no way for a hired man to act, let alone a pardner.'

"So, of course, he got the best of me as usual, and we climbed into the stage when she come along. Now, our bad luck seemed to hold, because you wouldn't find many men in that country who wouldn't stake two fellers to a waggon ride wherever they wanted to go, and be pleasant about it. I'd have sure seen that the man got paid, even if Aggy forgot it, but the man that drove us was the surliest brute that ever growled. When you'd speak to him, he'd say, 'Unh'—a style of thing that didn't go well in that part of the country. I kept my mouth shut, as knowing that I didn't have the come-up-with weighed on my spirits; but Aggy gave him the jolly. He only meant it in fun, and there was plenty of reason for it, too, for you never seen such a game of driving as that feller put up in all your life. The Lord save us! He cut around one corner of a mountain, so that for the longest second I've lived through, my left foot hung over about a thousand feet of fresh air. I'd have had time to write my will before I touched bottom if we'd gone over. I don't know as I turned pale, but my hair ain't been of the same rosy complexion since.

"'Well!' says Aggy in a surprised tone of voice when we got all four wheels on the ground again. 'Here we are!' says he. 'Who'd have suspected it? I thought he was going to take the short cut down to the creek.'

"The driver turned round with one corner of his lip h'isted—a dead ringer of a mean man—Says he to Aggy, 'Yer a funny bloke, ain't yer?'

"'Why!' says Ag, 'that's for *you* to say—wouldn't look well coming from me—but if you press me, I'll admit I give birth to a little gem now and then.'

"Our bold buck puts on a great swagger. 'Well, yer needn't be funny in this waggon,' says he. 'The pair of yer spongin' a ride! Yer needn't be gay—yer hear me, don't cher?'

"'Why, I hear you as plain as though you set right next me,' says Ag. 'Now, you listen and see if I'm audible at the same range—You're a blasted chump!' he roars, in a tone of voice that would have carried forty mile. 'Did *you* hear that, Red?' he asks very innocent. I was so hot at the driver's sass—the cussed low-downness of doing a feller a favour and then heaving it at him—that you could have lit a match on me anywheres, but to save me I couldn't help laughing—Ag had the comicallest way!

"At that the driver begins to larrup the horses. I ain't the kind to feel faint when a cayuse gets what's coming to him for raising the devil, but to see that lad whale his team because there wasn't nothing else he dared hit, got me on my hind legs. I nestled one hand in his hair and twisted his ugly mug back.

"'Quit that!' says I.

"'You let me be—I ain't hurting *you*,' he hollers.

"'That ain't to say I won't be hurting you soon,' says I. 'You put the bud on them horses again, and I'll boot the spine of your back up through the top of your head till it stands out like a flag-staff. Just one more touch, and you get it!' says I.

"He didn't open his mouth again till we come to the river. Then he pulled up. 'This is about as far as I care to carry you two gents for nothin',' he says. 'Of course you're two to one, and I can't do nothing if you see fit to bull the thing through. But I'll say this: if either one or both of you roosters has got the least smell of a gentleman about him, he won't have to be told his company ain't wanted twice.'

"Now, mind you, Ag and me didn't have the first cussed thing—not grub, nor blankets, nor gun, nor nothing; and this the feller well knew.

"'Red,' says Aggy, 'what do you say to pulling this thing apart and seeing what makes it act so?'

"'No,' says I, 'don't touch it—it might be catching. Now, you whelp!' says I to the driver, 'you tell us if there's a place where we can get anything to eat around here?' We'd expected to go hungry until we hit the camp some forty mile further on, where we knew there'd be plenty for anybody that wanted it.

"'Yes,' says he; 'there's a man running a shack two mile up the river.'

"'All right,' says I. 'Drive on. You've played us as dirty a trick as one man can play another. If we ever get a cinch on you, you can expect we'll pull her till the latigoes snap.'

"He kept shut till he got across the river, where he felt safe.

"'It's all right about that cinch!' he hollers back, grinning. 'Only wait till you get it, yer suckers! Sponges! Beats! Dead-heads! Yah!'

"Well, a man can't catch a team of horses, and that's all there is about it, but I want to tell you he was on the anxious seat for a quarter of a mile. We tried hard.

"When we got back to where we started and could breathe again, we held a council of war.

"'Now Aggy,' says I, 'we're dumped—what shall we do?'

He sat there awhile looking around him, snapping pebbles with his thumb.

"'Tell you what it is, Red,' he says at last, 'we might as well go mining right here. This is likely gravel, and there's a river. If that bar in front of you had been further in the mountains, it would have been punched full of holes. It's only because it's on the road that nobody's taken the trouble to see what was in it. This road was made by cattle ranchers, that didn't know nothing about mining, and every miner that's gone over the trail had his mouth set to get further along as quick as possible—just like us. Do you see that little hollow running down to the river? Well you try your luck there. I give you that place as it's the most probable, and you as a tenderfoot in the business will have all the luck. I'll make a stab where I am.'

"Well, sir, it sounds queer to tell it, and it seems queerer still to think of the doing of it, but I hadn't dug two feet before I come to bed-rock, and there was some heavy black chunks.

"'Aggy,' says I, 'what's these things?' throwing one over to him. He caught it and stared at it.

"'Where did you get that?' says he, in almost a whisper.

"'Why, out of the hole, of course!' says I, laughing. 'Come take a look!'

"Aggy wasn't the kind of man to go off the handle over trifles, but when he looked into that hole he turned perfectly green. His knees give out from under him and he sat on the ground like a man in a trance, wiping the sweat off his face with a motion like a machine.

"'What the devil ails you?' says I astonished. I thought maybe I'd done something I hadn't ought to do, through ignorance of the rules and regulations of mining.

"'Red,' says he dead solemn, 'I've mined for twenty year, and from Old Mexico to Alaska, but I never saw anything that was ace-high to that before. Gold laying loose in chunks on top of the bed-rock is too much for me—I wish Hy could see this.'

"'Gold!' says I. 'What you talking about? What have those black hunks to do with gold?'

"The only answer he made was to lay the one I had thrown to him on top of a rock and hit her a crack with a pick. Then he handed it to me. Sure enough! There under the black was the yeller. Of course, if I'd known more about the business I could have told it by the weight, but I'd never seen a piece of gold fresh off the farm before in my life. I hadn't the slightest idea what it looked like, and I learned afterward it all looks different. Some of it shines up yaller in the start; some of it's red, and some is like ours, coated black with iron-crust.

"So I looked at Ag, and Ag looked at me, neither one of us believing anything at all for awhile. I simply couldn't get hold of the thing—I ain't yet, for that matter. I expect to wake up and find it a pipe dream, and in some ways I wouldn't mind if it was. I never was so completely two men as I was on that occasion. One of 'em was hopping around and hollering with Ag, yelling 'hooray!' and the other didn't take much interest in the proceedings at all. And it wasn't until I thought, 'Now I can pay that cussed coyote of a stage driver what I owe him!' that I got any good out of it. That brought it home to me. When I spoke to Ag about paying the driver, he says, 'That's so,' then he takes a quick look around. 'We can pay him in full, too, old horse!' he hollers, and there was a most joyful smile on his face.

"'Red,' says he, 'do you know this is the only ford on the river for—I don't know how many miles—perhaps the whole length of her?'

"'Well?' says I.

"'Our little placer claim,' says Aggy slowly, rubbing his hands together, 'covers that ford; and by a judicious taking up of claims for various uncles and brothers and friends of ours along the creek on the lowlands, we can fix it so they can't even bridge it.'

"'Do you mean they can't cross our claim if we say they can't?'

"'Sure thing!' says Aggy. 'There's you

and me and the law to say "no" to that—I wish I had a gun.'

"'You don't need any gun for that skunk of a driver.'

"'Of course not, but there'll be passengers, and there's no telling how excited them passengers will be when they find they've got to go over the hills ford-hunting.'

"'Are you going to send 'em all around, Ag?'

"'The whole bunch. Anybody coming back from the diggings has gold in his clothes, so it won't hurt 'em none, and I propose to give that stage line an advertising that won't do it a bit of good. Come along, Red; let's see that lad that has the shack up the river. We need something to eat, and maybe he's got a gun. If he's a decent feller, we'll let him in on a claim. Never mind about the hole!—it won't run away, and there's nobody to touch anything—come on.'

"So we went up the river. The man's name was White, and he was a white man by nature, too. He fed us well, and was just as hot as us when we told him about the stage driver's trick. Then we told him about the find and let him in.

"'Now,' says Aggy, 'have you got a gun?'

"'I have *that*,' says the man. 'My dad used to be a duck-hunter on Chesapeake Bay. When you say "gun," *I'll* show you a gun.' He dove in under his bunk and fetched out what I should say was a number one bore shot gun. with barrels six foot long.

"'Gentlemen,' says he, holding the gun up and patting it lovingly, 'if you ram a quarter-pound of powder in each one of them barrels, and a handful of buck-shot on top of that, you've got an argument that couldn't be upset by the Supreme Court. I'll guarantee that when you point her anywheres within ten feet of a man not over a hundred yards away, and let her do her duty, all the talent that that man's family could employ couldn't gather enough of him to recognize him by, and you won't be in bed more'n long enough to heal a busted shoulder.'

"'I hope it ain't going to be my painful line of performance to pull the trigger,' says Aggy. 'I think the sight of her would have weight with most people. When's the stage due back?'

"'Day after to-morrow, about noon.'

"'That gives us lots of time to stake, and to salt claims that can't show cause their own selves,' says Aggy. 'I think we're all right.'

"The next day we worked like the Old Harry. We had everything fixed up right by nightfall, and there was nothing to do but dig and wait.

"Curious folks we all are, ain't we? I should have said my own self that if I'd found gold by the bucketful, I'd be more interested in that, than I would be in getting even with a mutt that had done me dirt, but it wasn't so. Perhaps it was because I hadn't paid much attention to money all my life, and I had paid the strictest attention to the way other people used me. Living where there's so few folks accounts for that, I suppose.

"Getting even on our esteemed friend, the stage driver, was right in your Uncle Reddy's line, and Aggy and our new pard White seemed to take kindly to it, also.

"If ever you saw three faces filled with innocent glee, it was when we heard the wheels of that stage coming—why, the night before I was woke up by somebody laughing. There was Aggy sound asleep, sitting up hugging himself in the moonlight.

"'Oh, my! Oh, MY!' says he. 'It's the only ford for four thousand miles!'

"We planted a sign in the middle of the road with this wording on it in big letters, made with the black end of a stick.

NOTICE!!

THIS AND ADJOINING CLAIMS ARE THE PROPERTY OF AGAMEMNON G. JONES, RED SAUNDERS, JOHN HENRY WHITE, ET AL.

TRESPASSING DONE AT YOUR OWN RISK. OWNERS WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE REMAINS.

"There was a stretch of about a mile on the level before us. When the stage come in plain sight Aggy proceeds to load up 'Old Moral Suasion,' as he called her, so that the folks could see there was no attempt at deception. They come pretty fairly slow after that. At fifty yards, Ag hollers 'Halt!' The team sat right down on their tails.

"'Now, Mr. Snick'umfritz,' says Aggy, 'you that drives, I mean, come here and read this little sign.'

"'Suppose I don't?' says the feller, trying to be smart before the passengers.

"'It's a horrible supposition,' says Aggy, 'and the innocent will have to suffer with the guilty.' Then he cocks the gun.

"'God sakes! Don't shoot!' yells one of the passengers. 'Man, you ought to have more sense than to try and pick him out of a crowd with a shot-gun! Get down there, you fool, and make it quick!'

"So the driver walked our way, and read. He never said a word. I reckon he realized it was the only ford for four thousand miles, more or less, just as Aggy had remarked. There he stood, with his mouth and eyes wide open.

"'I'd like to have you other gentlemen come up and see our first clean up, so you won't think we're running in a windy,' says Aggy. They wanted to see bad, as you can imagine, and when they did see about fifteen pounds of gold in the bottom of my old hat, they talked like people that hadn't had a Christian bringing up.

"'Oh Lord!' groans one man. 'Brigham Young and all the prophets of the Mormon religion! This is my tenth trip over this line, and me and Pete Hendricks played a game of seven-up right on the spot where that gent hit her, not over a month ago, when the stage broke down! Somebody just make a guess at the way I feel and give me one small drink.' And he put his hand to his head. 'Say, boys!' he goes on, 'you don't want the whole blamed creek, do you? Let *us* in!'

"'How's that, fellers?' says Ag to me and White. We said we was agreeable.

"'All right, in you come!' says Aggy. 'There ain't no hog about our firm—but as for you,' says he, walking on his tip-toes up to the driver, 'as for you, you cock-eyed whelp, around you go! Around you go!' he hollers, jamming the end of Moral Suasion into the driver's trap. 'Oh, and WON'T you go 'round, though!' says he. 'Listen to me, now: if any one of your ancestors for twenty-four generations back had ever done anything as decent as robbing a hen-coop, it would have conferred a kind of degree of nobility upon him. It wouldn't be possible to find an ornerier cuss than you, if a man raked all hell with a fine-toothed comb. Now, you stare-coated, mangy, bandy-legged, misbegotten, outlaw coyote, fly!—fly!' whoops Aggy, jumping four foot in the air, 'before I squirt enough lead into your system to make it a paying job to melt you down!'

"The stage driver acted according to orders. Three wide steps and he was in the waggon, and with one screech like a p'izened bob-cat, he fairly lifted the cayuses over the first ridge. Nobody never saw him any more, and nobody wanted to.

"So that's the way I hit my stake, son, just as I'd always expected—by not knowing what I was doing any part of the time—and now, there comes my iron-horse coughing up the track! I'll write you sure, boy, and you let old Reddy know what's going on—and on your life, don't forget to give it to the lads straight why I sneaked off on the quiet! I've got ten years older in the last six months. Well, here we go quite fresh, and damned if I altogether want to, neither—too late to argue though—by-bye, son!"

What Love Is

LOVE starts with a little throb in the heart,
And in the end one dies
Like an ill-treated toy.
Love is born in a look or in four words;
The little spark that burnt the whole house!
Love is at first a look,
And then a smile,
And then a word,
And then a promise,
And then a meeting of two among flowers.
(*From the Arabic*, by E. Powys Mathers.)

What the Well-dressed Heroine Has Been Wearing

A PRETTY MAID OF WU—

She comes on pony-back: she is fifteen.
Blue-painted eyebrows—
Shoes of pink brocade—
Inarticulate speech—
But she sings bewitchingly well. LI-PO.

A DAMSEL OF ARABIA

"He became aware of a damsel as she were a branch swaying, with eyes languishing, eyebrows curled and finely pencilled and smooth cheeks rounded, clad in a gown the colour of a pomegranate-flower; and a mantilla of Sana'a work; but the perfect whiteness of her body overcame the redness of her gown. Moreover, O Prince of True Believers, round her neck was slung an amulet of red gold that fell down upon her breast—whilst her legs made mute the voices of their ankle-rings."

THE THOUSAND NIGHTS AND A NIGHT.

When in your floating robe
Woven with red silk and golden,
In your floating robe
Held round your hips
By a broidered belt,
Showing all curves
Of your reckless body. . . .
You pass me by. BURMESE (19th Century).

EUROPA AND THE BULL

Meanwhile, Europa, riding on the back of the divine bull, with one hand clasped the beast's great horn, and with the other caught up the purple fold of her garment, lest it might trail and be wet in the hoar sea's infinite spray, and her deep robe was swelled out by the winds, like the sail of a ship, and lightly still did waft the maiden onward.

MOSCHUS (translated by Andrew Lang).

SALAMMBO

From ankles to hips she was clad in a closely fitting network of narrow links, glittering like mother-of-pearl and designed to imitate the scales of a fish; her waist was encircled by a bright blue girdle with two crescent-shaped slits which revealed her breasts, their nipples being hidden by pendants of carbuncles. Her head-dress was peacock feathers studded with jewels. GUSTAVE FLAUBERT.

IN THE RUSSIAN MANNER

All around, on the bed, on a chair beside it, on the floor, were scattered the different portions of a magnificent white silk dress, bits of lace, and rich ribbon. On a small table at the pillow glittered a mass of diamonds, torn off and thrown down anyhow. From under a heap of lace at the end of the bed peeped a small white foot, which looked as though it had been chiselled out of marble; terribly, dreadfully still and white it seemed.

DOSTOIEVSKY.

A BABYLONIAN FLAPPER

Her arms, slender and spindle-shaped like those of very young girls, were enriched by a peculiar kind of metal bands and bracelets of glass beads; her hair was all twisted into little cords, and she wore upon her bosom a little idol-figure of green paste bearing a whip with seven lashes, which proved it to be an image of Isis; her brow was adorned with a shining plate of gold, and a few traces of paint relieved the coppery tint of her cheeks.

As for her costume, it was very odd indeed.

Fancy a *pagne*, or skirt, all formed of little strips of material bedizened with red and black hieroglyphics, stiffened with bitumen and apparently belonging to a freshly bandaged mummy. THÉOPHILE GAUTIER. (Translated by Lafcadio Hearn).

Your light breast veil is tawny brown with stags,
Stags with eyes of emerald, hunted by red kings.
Come, my beloved! MUHAMMAD DIN TALAI.

À LA GRECQUE

An India muslin gown, rather short and clinging like damp linen, revealed the delicate outlines of her shape; over this she wore a red drapery, numerous folds of which, gradually lengthening as they fell by her side, took the graceful curves of a Greek peplin. . . . To soften its immodesty still further, Marie threw a gauze scarf over her shoulders, left bare and far too low by the red drapery. She wound the long bands of her hair into the flat irregular cone above the nape of the neck which gives such grace to certain antique statues by an elongation of the head, while a few stray locks escaping from her forehead fell in shining curls beside her cheek. With a form and head thus dressed, she presented a perfect likeness of the noble masterpieces of Greek sculpture. BALZAC.

ANASTASIA RAKONITZ

The dress was of stiff black satin, embroidered with little white silk flowers, and finished off by some very fine old lace. The heavy train and the full skirt, weighted with jet trimmings, would have overwhelmed a slighter woman, but the Matriarch's height carried them regally. On her left arm she wore a bracelet in which a very fine pale ruby was surrounded by diamonds; on her right arm, another bracelet was set with rubies and diamonds alternately. Her pendant was an enamel portrait of an angel's head, surrounded by rubies; and the brooch clasped into her lace was a bird set with diamonds, in a circle of diamonds, with a large pigeon-blood ruby drop on either side. In her hair, still black, though with a frosty gleam along the left side, was set a tall comb studded with tiny brilliants. She held a fan of Chantilly lace, with occasional diamonds sewn in it, the handle and sticks of dark gray mother-o'-pearl, inset with a design of brilliants and rubies. G. B. STERN.

THE WIFE OF BATH

Her coverchief ful fyne weren of ground,—
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pounds,—
That on a Sunday were upin hir heed.
Her hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Full streite y-teyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe. CHAUCER.

MERE MAN SELECTS A COSTUME

"You are already long overdue at your dressmaker's; go at once, my dear, and while you are there, kindly order a white velvet riding-habit and a hat to match, with the longest plume it is possible to find in Paris; the hat itself should be fairly large, but sharply turned up on the right side. I wish you to wear it with your hair unpowdered; here the effect would be too startling, but in India I think we may allow ourselves a little bizarrerie to brighten the monotony of our days. You will ride only in the evening; the effect under a tropic moon should be picturesque in the extreme. If you fear the weight of velvet—though the best velvet of Lyons is remarkably soft and light—I should suggest corded silk. But follow your own inclination by all means, my dear; you understand my idea about the hat, I am sure." ELINOR WYLIE.

Come to me today wearing your green collar,
Make your two orange sleeves float in the air, and come to me.
Touch your hair with essence and colour your clothes yellow;
The deer of reason has fled from the hill of my heart;
Come to me. AFGHAN BALLADE. (Translated by E. Powys Mather).

THE INCOMPARABLE MAX ADORNS ZULEIKA FOR THE NIGHT OF NIGHTS

In sooth, no costume could have been more beautifully Cimmerian than Zuleika's, and yet, thought the Duke, watching her as the concert proceeded, the effect of her was not lugubrious. Her darkness shone. The black satin gown she wore was a stream of shifting high-lights. Big diamonds were around her throat and wrists, and tiny black diamonds starred the fan she wielded. In her hair gleamed a great raven's wing. And brighter, brighter than all these were her eyes. Assuredly no, there was nothing morbid about her. MAX BEERBOHM.

FILIA PULCHRIOR

"Right foot forward, toe turned out so: now drop a curtsy and show the red stockings, Trix. They've silver clocks, Harry. The Dowager sent 'em. She went to put 'em on," cries my lord. W. M. THACKERAY.

ELLEN'S MAMA GIVES HER A NEW MERINO

"What colour do you want?"

"Something dark, if you please."

"Well, there, that green's dark; wont that do? See, that would make very pretty for you."

"No," said Ellen; "Mama don't like green."

"Why don't she come and choose her stuff herself, then? What colour *does* she like?"

"Dark blue, or dark brown, or a nice gray would do," said Ellen, "if it is fine enough."

SUSAN WARNER.

WHAT THE MERCER REMEMBERED

"Oh, sir," replied Master Goldthred, "I promise you, she was in gentlewoman's attire—a very quaint and pleasing dress, that might have served the Queen herself; for she had a forepart with body and sleeves of ginger-coloured satin, which, in my judgment, must have cost by the yard some thirty shillings, lined with murrey taffeta, and laid down and guarded with broad laces of gold and silver. And her hat, sir, was truly the best fashioned thing that I have seen in these parts, being of tawny taffeta, embroidered with scorpions of Venice gold, and having a border garnished with gold fringe;—I promise you, sir, an absolute and all-surpassing device. Touching her skirts, they were in the old passe-devant fashion."

"I did not ask you of her attire, sir," said Tressilian, who had shown some impatience during their conversation, "but of her complexion—the color of her hair, her features."

"Touching her complexion," answered the mercer, "I am not so special certain; but I marked that her fan had an ivory handle curiously inlaid;—and then again, as to the colour of her hair, why I can warrant, be its hue what it might be, that she wore above it a net of green silk, parcel twisted with gold."

"A most mercer-like memory," said Lambourne; "the gentleman asks him of the lady's beauty, and he talks of her fine clothes." SIR WALTER SCOTT.

RHODA FLEMING

"She wore a red ribbon? If it had been Spring, you'd have seen roses. Oh! what a staunch heart that girl has. Where she sets it, mind! Her life where that creature sets her heart! But, for *me*, not a penny of comfort! Now for a whole week of her, day and night in that black dress with the coloured ribbon. On she goes: walking to church; setting at table; looking out of the window!—" GEORGE MEREDITH.

COLOUR

Never before had Rhoda seen such lovely clothes. A long gown with wide sleeves of blue-black satin, embroidered in peach-coloured flower petals and innumerable minute sapphire and orange butterflies, a short sleeveless jacket of sage green caught with looped red jade buttons and threaded with silver and indigo high-soled slippers crusted and tasseled with pearls. Her hair rose from the back in a smooth burnished loop. There were long pins of pink jade carved into blossoms, a quivering decoration of paper-thin gold leaves with moonstones in glistening drops, and a band of coral lotus buds. Pierced stone bracelets hung about her delicate wrists, fretted crystal balls swung from the lobes of her ears, and clasped on the ends of several fingers were long pointed filagrees of ivory.

JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER.

DRESSING FOR COFFEE

Lucia had not carried out the intention she had announced to Kitty. She had dressed in haste; but in Rickman's eyes the effect was that which Kitty had seen fit to deprecate. She had made herself very pretty indeed. He could not have given a very clear account of it, could not have said whether the thing she wore, that floating, sweeping, curling, trailing, folding, and caressing garment were made of grey gossamer in white or white in grey, but he was aware that it showed how divinely her slender body carried its flower, her head; showed that her arms, her throat, and the first sweep and swell of her shoulders, were of one tone with the luminous pallor of her face. Something in the dress, in her bearing and manner of approach, gave her the assured charm of womanhood for the unfinished loveliness of youth. MAY SINCLAIR.

DONA RITA

She was wearing a wrapper, a sort of dressing gown of pale blue silk embroidered with black and gold designs round the neck and down the front, lapped around her and held together by a belt of the same material. Her slippers were out of the same colour, with black bows at the instep. . . . I gazed frankly at Dona Rita's profile irregular, animated, and fascinating in an undefinable way, at her well-shaped head with the hair twisted high up and apparently held in its place by a gold arrow with a jewelled shaft.

JOSEPH CONRAD.

THE BRIDE OF ONE WEEK

Up and down the length of the stately place a woman moved with a step that was slow and weary, and yet very restless,—the step of a thing that is chained. The woman was very young, and very pale; her skirts of olive velvet swept the white stone; her fair hair was coiled loosely with a golden arrow run through it; round her throat there were strings of pearls, the jewels of morning. All women envied her the richness of which those pearls were the emblem. She was Vera, Princess Zouroff. OUIDA.

GENTLE JULIA

"Julia dressed for a walk"—how scant the words! It was a summer walk that Julia had dressed for: and she was all too dashingly a picture of coolness on a hot day: a brunette in murmurous white, though her little hat was a film of blackest blue, and thus also in belt and parasol she had matched the colour of her eyes. Probably no human-made fabric could have come nearer to matching them, though she had once met a great traveller—at least he went far enough for comparisons—who told her that the Czarina of Russia had owned a deep sapphire of precisely the colour, but the Czarina's was the only sapphire yet discovered that had it. One of Newland Sander's longest Poems-to-Julia was entitled "Black Sapphires." BOOTH TARKINGTON.

"ARCHIE WAS SEDULOUS AT CHURCH—"

Her frock was of straw-coloured jaconet muslin, cut low at the bosom and short at the ankle, so as to display her *demi-broquins* of Regency violet, crossing with many straps upon a yellow cobweb stocking. According to the pretty fashion in which our grandmothers did not hesitate to appear, and our great-aunts went forth armed for the pursuit and capture of our great-uncles, the dress was drawn up so as to mould the contour of both breasts, and in the nook between a cairngorm brooch maintained it. Here, too, surely in a very enviable position trembled the nosegay of primroses. She wore on her shoulders—or rather on her back and not on her shoulders, which it scarcely passed—a French coat of sarsenet, tied in front with Margate braces, and of the same colour with her violet shoes. About her face clustered a disorder of dark ringlets, a little garland of yellow French roses surmounted her brow, and the whole was crowned by a village hat of chipped straw. Amongst all the rosy and all the weathered faces that surmounted her in church, she glowed like an open flower—girl and raiment and the cairngorm that caught the daylight, and returned it in a fiery flash, and the threads of bronze and gold that blazed in her hair.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

MISS MONTICUE MAKES A GAY CALL

Ethel skipped into her bedroom and arrayed herself in a grass green muslin of decent cut, a lace scarf, long faun coloured kid gloves and a muslin hat to correspond. She carried a parasol in one hand, also a green silk bag containing a few stray hair pins, a clean handkerchief, five shillings and a pot of ruge in case. She looked a dainty vishen with her fair hair blowing in the breese. DAISY ASHFORD.

SHE DRESSED TOO WELL

Ellen was also respectable, but not eminently so. Only so by the skin of her even white teeth. She behaved very well, but she dressed too well, not at all like a married woman. . . .

She was at the present moment in one of the upper chambers of the Skepinth residence dressing herself, but not for the afternoon. When a woman does that, she performs her toilette in a general way for no particular effect. Ellen was making a rite of this business. She had a definite personal aim in view. She had recently added Red Cross work to her virtues. And she had an important engagement to keep with some one about that. She stood before her mirror, regarding her image carefully and gravely as if this toilette was a prayer she had made of herself which she hoped would be acceptable to the Red Cross. So much depended on the appeal when you were getting subscriptions.

Well, she looked sufficiently appealing. There could be no doubt about that. Her gray crêpe, figured with dimmest corn flowers, floated above the silk petticoat like mist above shining water. Her broad-brimmed hat had a song of wild flowers on it maiden sweet. A very narrow blue ribbon was tied around her waist in a frivolous little bow behind. No ornaments, only a Red-Cross button pinned in the folds of lace beneath her throat. She was already late for the appointment, she reflected, consulting her watch, but that made no difference. She must make sure of herself first. She did, going carefully over each detail, trying her hat at another angle, humming a little tune, carefully engaging a lock of her hair to droop over one ear. All these things she did over and over. No wonder the women of Sulgrave, maids and matrons, distrusted her. CORRA HARRIS.

Monsieur Lecoq

The Master Detective Makes His Début

By ÉMILE GABORIAU

Em. Gaboriau

CHAPTER XXIX

LEFT alone, M. Segmuller returned mechanically to his office, guided by force of habit rather than by any volition of his own.

All his faculties were hard at work; and so great was his preoccupation that he, who was ordinarily the quintessence of politeness, entirely forgot to return the salutations which he received on his way.

How had this case, until now, been conducted? By hazard, according to the caprice of events. Like a man lost in the darkness, he had left his course to chance, walking toward anything which, in the distance, seemed to him like a light.

To travel in this way is a useless expenditure of time and strength. He admitted this in recognizing the urgent and pressing necessity of some definite plan of action.

Since he had not succeeded in capturing the city by a sudden attack, he was compelled to resign himself to the methodical delays of a regular and protracted siege.

And he decided to do this at once, for he felt that the hours were fleeting all too fast. He knew that delay only increased the uncertainty of success, and that the investigation of a crime becomes more and more difficult, in proportion as one is removed from the time when said crime was committed.

There were some things that might still be done.

Ought he not to confront the murderer, the Widow Chupin, and Polyte with the bodies of their victims?

Such horrible encounters are sometimes productive of unhoped-for results.

More than one murderer, when unsuspectedly brought into the presence of his victim, had changed color and lost his assurance.

There were other witnesses whom he could examine. Papillon, the coachmen; the *concièrge* of the mansion on the Rue de Bourgogne, where the two women had taken refuge for a moment, a Mme. Milner, the mistress of the Hôtel de Mariembourg.

Would it not also be advisable to summon, with the least possible delay, some of the residents in the vicinity of the Poivrière, and some comrades of Polyte, as well as the proprietor of the Rainbow, where the victims and the murderer had passed a portion of the evening?

Certainly, one had no reason to hope for any great enlightenment from any particular one of these witnesses, but each one might add his conjectures, express an opinion, or be able to throw some light on the subject.

Goquet, the smiling clerk, acting in compliance with the orders of the judge, had just finished drawing up at least a dozen citations, when Lecoq reappeared.

"Well?" exclaimed the judge, eagerly.

Really, the question was superfluous. The result of his expedition was plainly written upon the face of the detective.

"Nothing—always nothing."

"But how can that be? Do they not know to whom the permission to visit Polyte Chupin was given?"

"Pardon, Monsieur, they know but too well. We find only a fresh proof of the infernal skill with which the accomplice profits by every circumstance. The permit that was used yesterday was in the name of a sister of the Widow Chupin, Rose Adelaide Pitard. The card of admission was given her more than a week ago, in compliance with a request which was indorsed by the commissioner of police."

The surprise of the judge was so intense that it gave to his face an almost ludicrous expression.

"Is this aunt also in the plot?" he murmured.

The detective shook his head.

"I think not," he answered. "It was not she, at all events, who was in the prison parlor yesterday. The clerks at the prefecture remember the widow's sister very well, and gave me a full description of her. She is a woman over five feet in height, very dark complexioned, very wrinkled and weather-beaten in appearance, and about sixty years of age. The visitor yesterday was small, blond, and apparently not more than forty-five."

"If that is the case," interrupted M. Segmuller, "this visitor must be one of our fugitives."

"I do not think so."

"Who do you suppose she was, then?"

"The mistress of the Hôtel de Mariembourg—that clever woman who succeeded so well in deceiving me. But she had better take care! There are means of verifying my suspicions."

The judge scarcely heard Lecoq's words, so enraged was he at the inconceivable audacity and marvellous devotion of these people who risked everything to preserve the incognito of the murderer.

"But how could the accomplice have known of the existence of this permit?"

"Oh, nothing could be easier, Monsieur. When the Widow Chupin and the accomplice held their interview at the station-house of the Barrière d'Italie, they both realized the necessity of warning Polyte. They tried to devise some way of seeing him; the old woman remembered her sister's card of admission, and the man made some excuse to borrow it."

"Such is undoubtedly the case," said M. Segmuller, approvingly. "It will be necessary to ascertain, however——"

Lecoq's bearing was that of a resolute man, whose eager zeal has no need of a stimulant.

"And I *will* ascertain," said he, "if you, Monsieur, will intrust the matter to me. No aid to success shall be neglected. Before evening I would have two spies on the watch—one at the Rue de la Butte-aux-Cailles, the other at the door of the Hôtel de Mariembourg. If the accomplice attempted to visit Toinon, or Madame Milner, he should be arrested. It would be our turn then!"

But there was no time to waste in words and in idle boastings. He checked himself, and took his hat preparatory to departure.

"Now," said he, "I must ask Monsieur le Juge for my liberty; if he has any orders to give me, he will find a trusty messenger in the corridor, Father Absinthe, one of my colleagues. I wish to discover some fact in regard to two of our most important articles of conviction, Lacheneur's letter and the ear-ring."

"Go, then," responded M. Segmuller, "and good luck to you!"

Good luck! The detective, indeed, looked for it. If, up to the present moment, he had taken his successive defeats good-humouredly, it was because he believed that he had a talisman in his pocket which would insure him victory at last.

"I shall be very stupid if I am not capable of discovering the owner of an article of such great value!" he said, referring to the diamond. "And when we find the owner, we discover, at the same time, the identity of our mysterious prisoner!"

The first step to be taken was to ascertain in what shop this ornament had been purchased. To go from jeweller to jeweller, asking: "Is this your work?" would be a tedious process.

Fortunately, Lecoq knew a man who would be willing to give him all the information in his power.

This man was an old Hollander, named Van Numen, who, where jewelry or precious stones were concerned, was without a rival in Paris.

He was employed in the prefecture in the capacity of an expert in such matters. He was considered rich; but he was far more wealthy than people supposed. Shabby as he always was in appearance, he had a passion for diamonds. He always had some of them about his person, in a little box, which he drew out of his pocket a dozen times an hour, as a snuff-taker brings out his snuff-box.

This worthy man greeted Lecoq very affably. He put on his glasses, examined the jewel with a grimace of satisfaction, and, in the tone of an oracle, said:

"That stone is worth eight thousand francs, and it was set by Doisty, on the Rue de la Paix."

Twenty minutes later Lecoq entered the establishment of this celebrated jeweller.

Van Numen was not mistaken. Doisty immediately recognized the ornament, which had, indeed, come from his store. But to whom had he sold it? He could not recollect, for it had passed out of his hands three or four years before.

"But wait a moment," he added; "I will ask my wife, who has an incomparable memory."

Mme. Doisty deserved this eulogium. A single glance at the jewel enabled her to say that she had seen this ear-ring before, and that the pair had been purchased from them by the Marquise d'Arlange.

"You must recollect," she added, turning to her hsuband, "that the marquise paid us only nine thousand francs on account, and that we had all the trouble in the world in collecting the remainder."

Her husband did remember this circumstance.

"Now," said the detective, "I would like the address of this marquise."

"She lives in the Faubourg St. Germain," responded Mme. Doisty, "near the Esplanade des Invalides."

CHAPTER XXX

While in the presence of the jeweller, Lecoq had refrained from any demonstration of satisfaction.

But when he had left the store, he evinced such delirious joy that the amazed passers-by wondered if the man were not mad. He did not walk, he fairly danced over the stones, gesticulating all the while in the most ridiculous fashion, as he addressed this triumphant monologue to the empty air:

"At last," said he, "this affair emerges from the mystery that has enshrouded it. At last I reach the veritable actors in the drama, these exalted personages whom I had suspected. Ah! Gevrol, illustrious general! you wished a Russian princess, but you will be obliged to content yourself with a simple marquise."

But this species of vertigo gradually disappeared. His good sense reasserted itself, and the young man felt that he would have need of all his coolness, all his penetration, and all his sagacity to bring this expedition to a successful termination.

What course should he pursue, on entering the presence of the marquise, in order to draw a full confession from her, and to obtain all the details ot the murder, as well as the murderer's name?

"It will be best to threaten her, to frighten her into confession; that will be the best way. If I give her time for reflection, I shall learn nothing."

He paused in his cogitations, for he had reached the abode of the Marquise d'Arlange—a charming house, surrounded by a garden; and before entering the mansion, he deemed it advisable to learn something of its interior and of its inmates.

"It is here, then," he murmured, "that I shall find the solution of the enigma! Here behind those rich curtains crouches the frightened fugitive of the other night. For what an agony of fear must torture her since she has discovered the loss of the jewel!"

For more than an hour sheltered beneath a neighbouring *porte-cochère*, Lecoq stood watching the house. He wished to see the face of some inmate of the mansion. But his time was lost. Not a face showed itself at the windows, not a valet traversed the court.

At last, losing patience, he determined to make some inquiries in the neighbourhood.

He could not take a decisive step without having some knowledge of the people he was to encounter. He was wondering where he could obtain the desired information, when he perceived, on the opposite side of the street, a wine-merchant smoking on the pavement in front of his shop.

He approached him, and, pretending that he had forgotten an address, politely inquired which house was the abode of the Marquise d'Arlange.

Without a word, without even condescending to remove his pipe from his mouth, the man pointed to the house.

But there was a way of rendering him communicative, and that was to enter his establishment, call for something to drink, and invite the proprietor to drink with him.

This the young man did, and the sight of two well-filled glasses unbound, as by a miracle, the tongue of the worthy shop-keeper.

One could not have found a better man to interrogate, as he had been established in that quarter for ten years, and was honoured by the patronage of most of the residents.

"I pity you if you are going to the house of the marquise to collect a bill," he remarked to Lecoq. "You will have plenty of time to learn the way to the house before you see the color of your money. You will only be another of the many creditors who never let that bell rest."

"The devil! Is she so poor as all that?"

"Poor! Everyone knows that she has an income of twenty thousand livres, without counting this house. But when one spends double one's income every year, you know——"

He stopped short, to call Lecoq's attention to two ladies who were passing—one, rather more than forty years of age, dressed in black; the other, very young, and still clothed in the garb of a school-girl.

"And that," he added, "is the marquise's granddaughter, Mademoiselle Claire, attended by her governess, Mademoiselle Smith."

Lecoq's head whirled.

"Her granddaughter?" he stammered.

"Yes; the daughter of her deceased son, if you like that any better."

"How old is the marquise, then?"

"At least sixty; but one would never suspect it. She is one of those persons who will live a hundred years, like trees. And what an old wretch she is! She would think no more of knocking me over the head than I would of emptying this glass of wine——"

"Pardon," interrupted Lecoq, "but does she live alone in that great house?"

"Yes; that is, with only her granddaughter, the governess, and two servants. But what is the matter with you?"

It was not strange that he asked this question, for Lecoq had turned as white as his shirt. The magic edifice of his hopes had crumbled beneath the weight of this man's words as completely as if it were a frail card-house constructed by some child.

"Nothing—nothing at all," he responded, in an uncertain voice.

But he could not endure this torture of uncertainty any longer. He went to the house and rang the bell.

The servant who came to open the door examined him attentively, then replied that madame la marquise was in the country.

Evidently he did him the honour of taking him for some creditor.

But he insisted so adroitly, he gave him to understand so explicitly that he did not come to collect money, he spoke so earnestly of urgent business, that the man finally admitted him to the vestibule, telling him that he would go and ascertain if madame had really gone out.

She was at home. An instant after the valet returned to tell Lecoq to follow him; and after passing a large and magnificently furnished drawing-room, he conducted him into a charming boudoir, hung with rose-colour.

There, in a large reclining chair by the fireplace, sat an old woman, large, bony, and terrible of aspect, loaded with ornaments and with paint. She was engaged in knitting a stripe of green wool.

She turned toward the visitor just enough to show him the *rouge* on one cheek; then, as he seemed rather frightened—a fact flattering to her vanity—she spoke to him quite affably.

"Ah, well! young man; what brings you here?"

Lecoq was not frightened, but he was intensely disappointed to see that Mme. d'Arlange could not be one of the women who had visited the Widow Chupin's saloon on that memorable night.

There was nothing about her appearance that corresponded in the least with the description given by Papillon.

Then the young man remembered the small footprints left in the snow by the two fugitives. The foot of this marquise, which showed itself below the bottom of her dress, was truly colossal in size.

"Well! are you dumb?" inquired the old lady, raising her voice.

Without making a direct response, Lecoq drew from his pocket the precious ear-ring, and, placing it upon the table beside her, he said:

"I bring you this article which I have found, and which, I am told, belongs to you."

Madame d'Arlange laid down her knitting to examine the jewel.

"It is true," she said, after a moment, "that this ornament formerly belonged to me. It was a fancy that I had, about four years ago, and it cost me dear—at least twenty thousand francs. Ah! Doisty, the man who sold me these diamonds, must make a handsome living. But I had a granddaughter to educate! Pressing need of money compelled me to sell them."

"To whom?" inquired Lecoq, eagerly.

"Eh!" exclaimed the lady, evidently shocked at his audacity, "you are very curious, upon my word!"

"Excuse me, Madame, but I am so anxious to find the owner of this valuable ornament."

Madame d'Arlange regarded her visitor with an air of mingled curiosity and surprise.

"Such honesty!" said she. "Oh, oh! And, of course, you do not hope for a sou by way of reward——"

"Madame!"

"Good, good! There is not the least need for you to turn as red as a poppy, young man. I sold these diamonds to a great German lady—for the nobility in Austria have some money left—to the Baroness de Watchau."

"And where does this lady live?"

"At the Père la Chaise, probably, since she died about a year ago. These women of the present day—a turn in the waltz, and a current of air, and it is all over with them! In my day, after each galop, young girls swallowed a great glass of sweetened wine, and sat down between two doors. And we did very well, as you see."

"But, Madáme," insisted Lecoq, "the Baron de Watchau must have left heirs—a husband, children——"

"No one but a brother, who holds a court position at Vienna; and who could not leave even to attend the funeral. He sent orders that all his sister's personal property should be sold—not even excepting her wardrobe—and the money sent to him."

Lecoq could not repress an exclamation of disappointment.

"How unfortunate!" he murmured.

"Why?" asked the old lady. "Under these circumstances, the diamond will probably remain in your hands, and I am rejoiced at it; it will be a just recompense for your honesty."

If fate, to all Lecoq's other afflictions, had determined to add that of irony, his cup of sorrow would, indeed, be full. The Marquise d'Arlange inflicted upon him the most exquisite torture when with every appearance of sincerity, she expressed a wish that he might never find the lady who had lost this costly jewel.

To cry out, to give vent to his anger, to reproach this old woman for her stupidity would have afforded him ineffable consolation. But in that case, what would become of his *rôle* of honest young man?

He forced his lips to display a smile; he even stammered an acknowledgment of her goodness. Then, as if he had no more to expect, he bowed low, and withdrew, overwhelmed by this new misfortune.

Owing to some strange fatality, or to the marvellous skill of his adversaries, he had seen all the threads upon which he had relied to guide him out of this labyrinth, break in his hands.

Was he the dupe of some new comedy? This was not probable.

If the murderer's accomplice had taken the jeweller, Doisty, into his confidence, he would have told him to reply to any inquiries by saying that he did not know to whom the diamonds had been sold, or that it had not come from his establishment.

But this complication of circumstances proved Doisty's sincerity at least.

Then the young man had other reasons for not doubting the truth of the assertions made by the marquise. A peculiar look, which he had detected between the jweller and his wife was a sufficient authentication.

This glance said very plainly that, in their opinion, the marquise, in purchasing the diamonds, had engaged in a little speculation, more common than people suppose among women of the world. She had bought on credit, to sell at a loss, profiting momentarily by the difference between the sum she had paid on account and the price she received for the jewels.

Lecoq was resolved to fathom the mystery that surrounded the ornament; and with this object in view, he returned to Doisty's establishment, and, by means of a plausible pretext, succeeded in gaining a sight of the books in which the proprietor recorded his sales.

On the year and the month that Mme. Doisty had mentioned, the sale of these ear-rings had been recorded, not only upon the day-book, but upon the ledger. The nine thousand francs paid by Mme. d'Arlange at long intervals were also duly recorded.

How Mme. Milner might inscribe a false entry upon her register, one could easily understand. But it was absurd to suppose that the jeweller had falsified all his accounts for four years.

The facts, therefore, were indisputable; still the young detective was not satisfied.

He hurried to the Faubourg-Saint-Honore, to the house which the Baroness de Watchau had occupied, and there he found a good-natured *concièrge*, who informed him that after the decease of that poor lady, her furniture and her personal property had been taken to an establishment on the Rue Drouot. "And the sale was under the charge of Monsieur Petit," added the obliging *concièrge*.

Without losing a minute, Lecoq ran to the establishment of this auctioneer, who made a specialty of rare collections of bric-à-brac.

M. Petit remembered the "Watchau sale" very well; it had made a quite a sensation at the time, and he soon found a long catalogue of the articles sold among his papers.

Many jewels were mentioned, with the sum paid, and the names of the parties purchasing; but there was not the slightest allusion to the accursed ear-rings.

Lecoq drew out the diamond which he had in his pocket. The auctioneer could not remember that he had ever seen it; but this was no evidence to the contrary—so many articles passed through his hands!

But this much he could declare upon oath; that the brother of the baroness, her heir, had received nothing—not so much as a pin's worth of his sister's effects; and that he had been in a great hurry to receive the proceeds, which amounted to the very pleasant sum of one hundred and sixty-seven thousand five hundred and thirty francs, after all expenses had been deducted.

"So everything that this lady possessed was sold?" inquired Lecoq.

"Everything."

"And what is the name of this brother?"

"Watchau, also. The Baroness had probably married one of her relatives. This brother, until last year, occupied a very prominent diplomatic position. He resides at Berlin now, I think."

Certainly this information would not seem to indicate that these witnesses had been tampered with; and yet Lecoq was not satisfied.

"It is very strange," he thought, on regaining his lodgings, "that to whichever side I turn in this affair, I find Germany. The murderer comes from Leipsic, Madame Milner must be a Bavarian, and now here is an Austrian baroness."

It was too late to make any further inquiries that evening, and Lecoq went to bed; but the next morning, at an early hour, he resumed his investigations with fresh ardour.

Now, there seemed to be only one chance of success left: the letter signed by Lacheneur, which had been found in the pocket of the murdered soldier.

This letter, judging from the half-effaced heading, must have been written in a *café* on the Boulevard Beaumarchais.

To discover in which *café* would be only child's play.

The fourth restaurant-keeper to whom Lecoq exhibited this letter recognized the paper as his.

But neither he, nor his wife, nor the young lady at the desk, nor the waiters, nor any of the guests present at the time, had ever in their lives heard the three syllables of this name, Lacheneur.

What was he to do now? Was the case entirely hopeless? Not yet.

Had not the dying soldier declared that this Lacheneur was an old comedian?

Seizing upon this frail clew, as a drowning man clutches at the merest fragment of the floating wreck, Lecoq turned his steps in another direction, and hurried from theatre to theatre, asking everyone, from the porters to the managers:

"Do you not know an actor named Lacheneur?"

Everywhere he met with the same response, not unfrequently enlivened by rough jokes. And very often those whom he interrogated inquired:

"What sort of a looking man is your artist?"

What could he reply? All his responses were necessarily limited to that phrase uttered by Toinon: "I thought him a very respectable-looking man." This was not a very graphic description, however. Besides, it was rather doubtful what a woman like the wife of Polyte Chupin meant by the word "respectable." Did she apply it to the man's age, to his personal appearance, or to his apparent fortune?

Sometimes they inquired:

"What *rôles* does your comedian play?"

And the young man, in his ignorance, could make no reply; but this much he could have said with truth, that this Lacheneur was playing a *rôle* now that made him, Lecoq, wild with despair.

He next had recourse to a mode of investigation which is generally the last resort of the police, but which is generally successful, because it is so sensible and simple.

He determined to examine all the books in which the law compels the proprietors of hotels and lodging-houses to keep a record of their guests.

Rising long before daybreak, and going to bed late at night, he spent all his time in visiting the hotels, furnished houses, and lodgings in Paris.

Vain search! Not once did he find the name of Lacheneur that haunted his brain. Was there really such a name? Was it not a pseudonym, invented for convenience? He had not found it even in the *Almanach Bottin*, where one finds all the most singular and absurd names in France—those which are formed of the most fantastic mingling of syllables.

But nothing could daunt him or turn him from the almost impossible task to which he had devoted himself. His obstinacy amounted well-nigh to monomania.

He was no longer subject to occasional outbursts of anger, which were quickly repressed; he lived in a state of constant exasperation, which impaired the clearness of his mind not a little.

No more theories, subtle reasoning, and ingenious deductions. He pursued his search, without method, without order, and much as Father Absinthe might have done when under the influence of alcohol.

Perhaps he had come to rely less upon his own shrewdness than upon chance to drive away the shadows which he divined, which he felt, which he breathed.

CHAPTER XXXI

If one throws a heavy stone into a lake it produces a very considerable commotion, and the whole mass of water is agitated. But the great movement lasts only for a moment; the waves diminish in violence in proportion as the circles enlarge, the surface regains its smoothness, and soon no trace remains of the stone, now buried in the depths below.

So it is with events that occur in our daily life, however momentous they may appear. It seems as if their impression would endure for years—nonsense! Time closes over them more quickly than the water of the lake; and more rapidly than the stone, they sink into the depths of the past.

At the end of a fortnight, the frightful crime committed in the Widow Chupin's saloon—the triple murder which had made all Paris shudder, with which all the papers had been full, was forgotten as entirely as any commonplace assassination in the reign of Charlemagne.

Only at the Palais de Justice, at the prefecture, and at the prison, was it remembered.

The efforts of M. Segmuller—and Heaven knows that he had spared none—had met with no better success than those of Lecoq.

Close interrogations, skillfully managed examinations, sharp questions, insinuations, menaces, promises, all spent themselves in vain against that invincible force—the strongest man has at his disposal—the force of absolute denial.

One and the same spirit seemed to animate the Widow Chupin, Polyte, Toinon, the virtuous, and Mme. Milner, the mistress of the Hôtel de Mariembourg.

Their depositions proved that they were all in league with the accomplice; and that they all acted in obedience to the same policy. But what did this knowledge avail!

The attitude of these witnesses never varied! It might happen, sometimes, that their looks gave the lie to their denials; but one could read in their eyes their unshaken determination to conceal the truth.

There were moments when the judge, overpowered by a sense of the insufficiency of purely moral weapons, almost regretted the overthrow of the Inquisition.

Yes, in the presence of these allegations, whose impudence almost amounted to insult, he no longer wondered at the barbarities practised by the judges of the Middle Ages—the rack which broke the muscles of its victims, the red-hot pincers, and all those horrible tortures which tore out the truth with the flesh itself.

The manner of the murderer was unaltered, or, if it were, it was only because he played his part with greater perfection each day, like a man who has become accustomed to strange clothing, and who is no longer made uncomfortable by it.

His assurance in the presence of the judge had increased, as if he were more sure of himself, and as if he had in some way learned that the prosecution had made no progress whatever.

During one of his later examinations, he had ventured to say, with something very like irony:

"Why do you keep me so long in the secret cells, Monsieur le Juge? Am I never to be set at liberty, or sent to the court of assizes? Am I to suffer much longer on account of the idea that has taken possession of you (how, I cannot tell), that I am a great personage?"

"I shall keep you until you have confessed," M. Segmuller had responded.

"Confessed what?"

"Oh! you know very well."

This strange man had then shrugged his shoulders, and in that half-despondent, half-mocking tone which was habitual to him, he had responded:

"In that case, there is no hope of my ever leaving this accursed prison!"

It was by reason of this conviction, undoubtedly, that he seemed to be making preparations for an indefinite stay.

He had succeeded in obtaining a portion of the contents of his trunk; and he manifested an almost childish joy in once more entering into possession of his property.

Thanks to the money which had been found upon his person and deposited with the clerk, he was able to procure many little luxuries, which are never denied prisoners who have not yet been tried for whatever may be the charges against them; they have a right to be considered innocent until the jury has decided to the contrary.

To pass away the time, he had asked for a volume of Béranger's poems; and as his request had been granted, he spent most of the day in learning the songs by heart, and in singing them, in a loud voice, and with considerable taste.

He pretended that he was cultivating a

talent which would be useful to him when he was again at liberty.

For he had no doubt of his acquittal; at least, so he declared.

He was anxious about the date of his trial, but was not in the least anxious about the result.

He appeared despondent only when he spoke of his profession. He pined for the stage. He almost wept when he thought of his fantastic, many-coloured costumes, of his audience, and of his sallies of wit, accompanied by bursts of noisy music.

In his demeanour he had become more frank, more communicative, more submissive; in short, a better fellow.

It was with marked *empressement* that he embraced every opportunity to babble about his past. He liked to recount his adventures during his roving life with M. Simpson, the showman. He had, of course, travelled a great deal; and he remembered all he had seen, and possessed an inexhaustible fund of amusing stories with which he entertained his keepers.

And every word, and even his slightest action, was characterized by such naturalness, that the employees of the prison no longer doubted the truth of his assertions.

The head keeper was more difficult to convince.

He had declared that this pretended buffoon must be a dangerous criminal who had escaped from the galleys, and who was for this reason determined to conceal his antecedents. Believing this, he had left no means untried to prove it.

For more than a fortnight May was submitted to the scrutiny of members of the police force and detectives, public and private.

Not one of them recognized him. His photograph had been sent to all the prisons and police head-quarters throughout the empire; but not one of the officials remembered May's features.

Other circumstances occurred, each of which had its influence, and they all spoke in favour of the prisoner.

The second bureau of the prefecture found positive traces of the existence of a foreign artist, named Tringlot, who was probably the man referred to in May's story. This Tringlot had been dead several years.

Moreover, inquiries which had been made in Germany revealed the fact that a certain M. Simpson was very well known in that country, having achieved great renown as a circus manager.

Before so many proofs, the head keeper was forced to yield, and he openly confessed that he had been mistaken.

"The prisoner, May," he wrote to the judge, "is really and truly what he pretends to be. There can be no further doubt on the subject."

This was done at the suggestion of Gevrol. So M. Segmuller and Lecoq remained alone in their opinion.

It is true that their opinion was worthy, at least, of consideration, since they alone knew all the details of the investigation which had been conducted with strict secrecy.

But that mattered little. To struggle on against all the world is always unpleasant, and not a little dangerous, even if one is a thousand times right.

The "May affair" had become notorious among the members of the police force; and Lecoq was assailed by rough jokes whenever he appeared at the prefecture. Nor did the judge escape entirely.

More than one colleague on meeting him in the corridor, inquired, with a smile, what he had done with his Gaspard Hauser, with his man in the Iron Mask, with his mysterious mountebank.

Both M. Segmuller and Lecoq were afflicted with the angry impatience every man feels when he is absolutely certain that he is right, but has no means of proving it.

They both lost their appetites; they grew thin and haggard.

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the judge, sometimes, "why did Escorval fall? Had it not been for his accursed mishap, he would have been obliged to endure these perplexities, and I—I should be enjoying myself like other people."

"And I thought myself so shrewd!" murmured the young detective.

But the idea of yielding never once occurred to them. Although their temperaments were diametrically opposed to each other, both men had sworn to solve this tantalizing enigma.

Lecoq, indeed, had resolved to renounce all other claims upon his time, and to devote himself entirely to the study of this case.

"Henceforth," he said to M. Segmuller, "I also constitute myself a prisoner; and although he will not see me, I shall not lose sight of him!"

CHAPTER XXXII

Between the cell occupied by May and the roof of the prison was a loft, the ceiling of which was so low, that a man of average height could not stand upright in the room.

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A few straggling rays of sunlight peering through the interstices of the wall relieved the dense gloom but slightly.

In this unattractive abode, Lecoq, one fine morning, established himself.

It was at the hour when the prisoner was taking his daily walk, under the surveillance of two keepers, and the zealous detective could, without restraint, proceed to his work of installation.

Armed with a pickaxe, he removed two or three stones from the floor, making a small aperture, and then set himself at work to make another opening through the timbers below.

The hole which he made was in the form of a tunnel. Very large at the top, it had dwindled to an opening not more than two-thirds of an inch in diameter when it pierced the ceiling of the cell below.

The place where this aperture was made had been chosen so skilfully in advance that it was in the midst of some stains and patches of mould; hence, it was impossible for the prisoner to detect it from below.

While Lecoq was at work, the keeper of the prison and Gevrol, who had insisted upon accompanying him, appeared upon the threshold of the loft, laughing and sneering.

"So this is to be your observatory, Monsieur Lecoq?" remarked Gevrol.

"Yes, Monsieur."

"You will not be very comfortable here."

"I shall be less uncomfortable than you suppose. I have brought a large blanket, and I shall stretch myself out upon the floor and sleep here."

"So that, night and day, you will have your eye on the prisoner?"

"Yes, night and day."

"Without giving yourself time to eat or drink?" inquired Gevrol.

"Pardon! Father Absinthe will bring me my meals, execute any commissions I may have, and take my place on guard, if necessary."

The jealous general laughed loudly; but the laugh was a trifle constrained.

"Well, I pity you," he said.

"Very possibly."

"Do you know what you will look like with your eye glued to that hole?"

"Say it! You need be under no constraint."

"Ah, well! you will look like one of those silly naturalists who put all sorts of little insects under a magnifying glass, and spend their lives in watching them."

Lecoq had finished his work; he rose from the floor.

"No comparison could be more just, General," he replied. "You have guessed it. To these naturalists, of whom you speak so slightly, I owe the idea I am about putting into execution. By dint of studying these little creatures—as you say—under a microscope, these patient and gifted men are enabled to discover the habits and the instincts of the insect world. Very well. What they can do with an insect, I will do with a man!"

"Oh ho!" said the keeper, considerably astonished.

"Yes, that is my plan, Monsieur," continued Lecoq. "I wish to learn this prisoner's secret; I will have it. I have sworn it, and I shall have it, because, however strong his courage may be, he will have his moments of weakness, and then I shall be there. I shall be there; if his will fails him, if believing himself alone he lets his mask fall for a moment, if he forgets his part for an instant, if some indiscreet word escapes him in his slumber, if despair elicits a groan, a gesture, a look—I shall be there."

The implacable resolution that vibrated in the young man's voice made a deep impression upon the keeper.

For an instant he was a believer in Lecoq's theory; and he was impressed by the strangeness of this conflict between a prisoner, determined to preserve the secret of his personality, and the prosecution, equally determined to wrest it from him.

"Upon my word! my boy, you are not wanting in courage and energy."

"Although it is misdirected," growled Gevrol.

He made this remark very slowly and deliberately; but in his secret soul he was by no means convinced of its truth. Faith is contagious, and he was troubled, in spite of himself, by Lecoq's imperturbable assurance.

What if this *débutant* in his profession should be right, and he, Gevrol, the oracle of the prefecture, wrong! What shame and ridicule would be his portion!

But once again he inwardly swore that this inexperienced man could be no match for an old veteran, and he added:

"The chief of police must have more money than he knows what to do with, to pay two men for such a nonsensical job as this."

Lecoq did not reply to this slighting remark. For more than a fortnight the general had improved every opportunity of making himself disagreeable so well, that the young man doubted his power to control his temper if the discussion were continued.

It would be better to keep silence, and to work and wait for success. To succeed! that would be revenge enough!

Moreover, he was impatient to see these unwelcome visitors depart. Perhaps he believed that Gevrol was quite capable of attracting the prisoner's attention by some unusual sound.

As soon as they went away, Lecoq hastily spread his blanket, and stretched himself out upon it in such a position that he could alternately apply his eye and his ear to the aperture.

In this position he had an admirable view of the cell below. He could see the door, the bed, the table, the chair; only the small space near the window and the window itself were beyond his range of observation.

He had scarcely completed his survey, when he heard the bolts rattle; the prisoner was returning from his walk.

He seemed in excellent spirits, and was just completing what was, undoubtedly, a very interesting story, since the keeper lingered for a moment to hear the conclusion. Lecoq was delighted with the success of his experiment. He could hear as easily as he could see. Each sound reached his ear distinctly; he had not lost a single word of the recital, which was amusing, but rather coarse.

The guard departed. May walked across his cell a few times, then took up his volume of Béranger, and for an hour or more seemed completely engrossed in its contents. Finally, he threw himself down upon the bed.

He remained there until the hour of his evening repast, when he rose and ate with an excellent appetite. Then he resumed the study of his book, and did not go to bed until the lights were extinguished.

Lecoq knew that during the night his eyes would not serve him, but, for all that, he hoped that some tell-tale word would escape the prisoner.

In this expectation he was disappointed. May tossed restlessly upon his pallet; he sighed, and one might have thought that he was sobbing, but not a syllable escaped his lips.

He remained in bed until very late the next morning; but on hearing the bell sound the hour of breakfast, eleven o'clock, he sprang from his couch with a bound, and after capering about his cell for a few moments, he began to sing, in a loud and cheerful voice, the old ditty:

"Diogene
Sous ton manteau
Libre et content, je ris, je bois, sans gêne——"

He did not cease his singing until the keeper entered his cell to bring him his breakfast.

The day differed in no respect from the one that had preceded it, nor did the night. The same might be said of the next day and of the days which followed it.

To sing, to eat, to sleep, to care for his hands and his nails—such was the life of the so-called buffoon. His manner, which never varied, was that of a naturally cheerful man, terribly bored.

Such was the perfection of this enigmatical person's acting, that Lecoq, after six days and nights of constant surveillance, had detected nothing decisive, nor even surprising.

Yet he did not despair. He had noticed that, every morning, while the employees of the prison were busy in distributing the food of the prisoners, this man repeated his song of Diogenes.

"Evidently this song is a signal," Lecoq said to himself. "What is going on there by the window that I cannot see? I will know to-morrow."

The following morning he arranged that May should be taken on his morning walk at half-past ten o'clock, and he then insisted that the keeper should accompany him to the prisoner's cell.

That worthy functionary was not very well pleased with this change in the usual order of things.

"What do you wish to show me?" he asked. "What is it that is so very curious?"

"Perhaps nothing," replied Lecoq; "perhaps something of great importance."

Eleven o'clock sounding soon after, he began singing the prisoner's song:

"Diogene
Sous ton manteau——"

He had scarcely finished the second line, when a bit of bread, no larger than a bullet, adroitly thrown through the window, dropped at his feet.

A thunder-bolt falling in May's cell would not have terrified the superintendent as much as did this inoffensive projectile.

He stood in silent dismay, his mouth wide open, his eyes starting from their sockets, as if he distrusted the evidence of his own senses.

What a disgrace! An instant before he would have staked his life upon the inviolability of the secret cells. He beheld his prison dishonoured—sneered at.

"A communication! a communication!" he repeated, with a horrified air.

Quick as lightning, Lecoq picked up the missile and held it up in triumph.

"I said this man was in communication with his friends," he murmured.

Lecoq's evident delight changed the superintendent's stupor into fury.

"Ah! my prisoners are writing!" he exclaimed, wild with passion. "My guards are acting as postmen! By my faith, this matter shall be looked into."

He rushed toward the door; Lecoq stopped him.

"What are you going to do, Monsieur?" he asked.

"I am going to call all the employees of this prison together, and inform them that there is a traitor among them, and that I must know who he is, as I wish to make an example of him. And if, in twenty-four hours from now, the culprit has not been discovered, every man connected with this prison shall be removed."

Again he started to leave the room, and Lecoq, this time, had almost to use force to detain him.

"Be calm, sir; be calm," he entreated.

"I *will* punish——"

"Yes, yes, I understand that, but wait until you have regained your self-possession. It is possible that the guilty party may be one of the prisoners who aid in the distribution of food every morning."

"What does that matter?"

"Pardon! It matters a great deal. If you noise this discovery abroad, if you say a single word about it, we shall never discover the truth. The traitor will not be fool enough to confess his guilt. We must be silent and wait. We will keep a close watch and detect the culprit in the very act."

These objections were so sensible that the keeper yielded.

"So be it," he sighed. "I will be patient. But let us see the missive that was enclosed in this morsel of bread."

Lecoq would not consent to this proposition.

"I warned Monsieur Segmuller that there would probably be some new developments this morning; and he must be waiting for me in his office. I must reserve the pleasure of opening this envelope for him."

The superintendent's face clouded. He would have given a great deal could he have kept this affair a secret; but that was entirely out of the question.

"Let us go and find the judge, then," said he, despondently.

They started, and on their way Lecoq endeavoured to convince the worthy man that he was quite wrong to deplore a circumstance which would be of incalculable benefit to the prosecution. Had he, until now, supposed himself more cunning than his prisoners? What an illusion! Had not the ingenuity of the prisoner always defied, and will it not always defy, the *finesse* of his guardians?

But they had reached the office, and at the sight of them, M. Segmuller and his clerk both sprang from their seats. They read startling news in the face of the young detective.

"What is it?" demanded the judge, eagerly.

Lecoq's sole response was to place the precious morsel of bread upon the desk. The judge opened it.

It contained a tiny scrap of the thinnest tissue-paper.

M. Segmuller unfolded it, and smoothed it upon the palm of his hand. As soon as he glanced at it, his brow contracted.

"Ah! this note is written in cipher," he exclaimed, striking his clinched fist violently upon his desk.

"We must not lose patience," said Lecoq, tranquilly.

He took the slip of paper, and read aloud the numbers that were inscribed upon it. They were as follows, separated by commas:

235, 15, 3, 8, 25, 2, 16, 208, 5, 360, 4, 36, 19, 7, 14, 118, 84, 23, 9, 40, 11, 99.

"And so we shall learn nothing from this note," murmured the keeper.

"Why not?" responded the smiling clerk. "There is no system of cipher which cannot be read with a little skill and patience. There are some people who make it their business."

"You are right," approved Lecoq. "And I myself once had a knack at it."

"What!" exclaimed the judge; "do you hope to find the key to this cipher?"

"With time, yes."

He was about placing the paper in his breast-pocket, but the judge begged him to examine it further.

He did so; and after a little, his face brightened, and, striking his forehead with his open palm, he cried:

"I have found it!"

An exclamation of surprise, and possibly of incredulity, escaped the judge, the keeper, and the clerk.

"At least I think so," added Lecoq, more cautiously. "The prisoner and his accomplice have, if I am not mistaken, adopted the system called the double book cipher. This system is very simple.

"The correspondents first agree upon some particular book, and both obtain a copy of the same edition.

"What if one desires to communicate with the other?

"He opens the book hap-hazard, and begins by writing the number of the page.

"Then he must seek, upon that page, the words necessary to give expression to his thought. If the first word which he desires to write is the twentieth word printed on the page, he writes the number 20; then he begins to count one, two, three, until he finds the next word that he wishes to use. If this word happens to be the sixth, he writes the figure 6; and he continues in this way until he has written all he wishes to communicate.

"You see, now, how the correspondent who receives this mission must begin. He finds the page indicated, and each figure represents a word."

"Nothing could be more clear," said the judge, approvingly.

"If this note that I hold here," pursued Lecoq, "had been exchanged between two persons who were at liberty, it would be folly to attempt its translation. This simple system is the only one which has completely baffled the efforts of the curious, simply because there is no way of ascertaining the book agreed upon.

"But such is not the case here; May is a prisoner, and he has but one book in his possession, 'The Songs of Béranger.' Let this book be sent for——"

The keeper was actually enthusiastic.

"I will run and fetch it myself," he interrupted.

But Lecoq, with a gesture, detained him.

"Above all, Monsieur, take care that May does not discover his book has been tampered with. If he has returned from his promenade, make some excuse to have him sent out of his cell again; and do not allow him to return there while we are using his book."

"Oh, trust me!" replied the superintendent.

He left the room, and so intense was his zeal, that he was back again in less than a quarter of an hour, bringing in triumph a little volume in 32mo.

With a trembling hand, Lecoq opened to page 235 and began to count.

The fifteenth word on the page was *I;* the third after, was the word *have;* the eighth following that, was *told;* the twenty-fifth, *her;* the second, *your;* the sixteenth, *wishes*.

Hence, the meaning of those six numbers was:

"I have told her your wishes."

The three persons who had witnessed this display of shrewdness could not restrain their admiration.

"Bravo! Lecoq," exclaimed the judge.

"I will no longer bet a hundred to one on May," thought the clerk.

But Lecoq was still busily engaged in deciphering the missive, and soon, in a voice trembling with gratified vanity, he read the entire note aloud. It was as follows:

"I have told her your wishes; she submits. Our safety is assured; we are waiting your orders to act. Hope! Courage!"

CHAPTER XXXIII

What a disappointment, after the fever of anxiety and expectation that had held the witnesses of this scene motionless and breathless!

This short and unintelligible epistle afforded no information whatever upon the subject in which all present were so deeply interested.

The light of hope which had sparkled in M. Segmuller's eye a moment before, faded; and Goquet returned to his former opinion, that the prisoner had the advantage over his accusers.

"How unfortunate," remarked the superintendent, with a shade of sarcasm in his voice, "that so much trouble and such marvellous penetration should be wasted!"

Lecoq, whose confidence seemed unalterable, regarding him with a bantering air, replied:

"So Monsieur thinks I have wasted my time! Such is not my opinion. This scrap of paper undeniably proves that if any person has been mistaken in regard to the identity of the prisoner, it certainly was not I."

"Very well. Monsieur Gevrol and I may have been mistaken; no one is infallible. But have you learned anything more than you knew before? Have you made any progress?"

"Why, yes, Monsieur. Now that people know the prisoner is not what he pretends to be, instead of annoying and hampering me, perhaps they will aid to discover who he really is."

Lecoq's tone, and his allusion to the difficulties he had encountered, wounded the keeper. But precisely because he felt the blood mount to his forehead under this just reproof, he resolved to cut short this discussion with an inferior.

"You are right," said he, sarcastically. "This May must be a very great and illustrious personage. Only, my dear Monsieur Lecoq (for there is an only), do me the favour to explain how such an important personage could disappear and the police not be advised of it? A man of rank, such as you suppose this prisoner to be, usually has a family, friends, relatives, *protégés*, and extended connections; and yet not a single person has lifted his voice during the three weeks that this May has been under my charge! Come, admit that you have not thought of this."

The keeper had just advanced the only serious objection that could be found against the theory advanced by the prosecution.

But Lecoq had seen it before. It had not been once out of his mind; and he had racked his brain to find some satisfactory explanation.

Undoubtedly he would have made some angry retort, as people are wont to do when their antagonists discover the weak spot in their armor, had not M. Segmuller interposed.

"All these recriminations do no good," he remarked, calmly; "we can make no progress while these continue. It would be much wiser to decide upon the course to be pursued under the present circumstances."

Thus reminded of the present situation of affairs, the young man smiled; all his rancour was forgotten.

"There is, I think, but one course to pursue," he replied, modestly; "and I believe it will be successful by reason of its simplicity. We must substitute a communication of our own composition for this one. That will not be at all difficult, since I have the key to the cipher. I shall only be obliged to purchase a similar volume of Béranger's songs; and May, believing that he is addressing his accomplice, will respond in all sincerity, and will reveal everything, perhaps——"

"Pardon!" interrupted the keeper, "how will you obtain possession of his reply?"

"Ah! you ask me too much. I know the way in which his letters have reached him. For the rest, I will watch and find a way; never fear!"

Goquet could not conceal an approving grin. If he had happened to have ten francs on hand, he would have risked them all on Lecoq just then.

"First, I will replace this missive by one of my own composition. To-morrow, at the breakfast hour, if the prisoner gives the signal, Father Absinthe will throw the morsel of bread enclosing the note through the window, while I from my observatory watch the effect."

He was so delighted with this plan that he at once rang the bell, and when the messenger appeared, he gave him a ten-sous piece and requested him to go at once and purchase some of the thinnest tissue-paper.

When he was in possession of the paper, which was apparently exactly like that upon which the note was written, he seated himself at the clerk's desk, and, armed with the volume of Béranger's poems, he began the composition of his missive, copying as closely as possible the forms of the figures used by the unknown correspondent.

This task did not occupy him more than ten minutes. Fearing to commit some blunder, he reproduced the words of the original letter, with but little change in the words themselves, but with an entire change of meaning.

His note read as follows:

"I have told her your wishes; she does not submit. Our safety is threatened. We are awaiting your orders. I tremble."

When this was completed, he rolled up the paper, and enclosing it in the fragment of bread, he said:

"To-morrow we shall learn something."

To-morrow! The twenty-four hours that separated the young man from the decisive moment seemed a century. What expedients he resorted to, in order to hasten the slow passage of time!

He explained to Father Absinthe clearly and minutely what he would have to do, and, sure of being understood, and certain that he would be obeyed, he went back to his loft.

The evening seemed long, and the night interminable, for he found it impossible to close an eyelid.

He rose at daybreak and saw that his prisoner was awake and was sitting on the foot of the bed. Soon he sprang up and paced restlessly to and fro. He was evidently in an unusually agitated frame of mind; he gesticulated wildly, and at intervals certain words—always the same words—escaped his lips.

"What misery! My God! what misery!" he repeated again and again.

"Ah! my boy," thought Lecoq, "you are anxious about the daily letter which you failed to receive. Patience, patience! One of my writing will soon arrive."

At last the young detective heard the stir that always preceded the distribution of food. People were running to and fro, *sabots* clicked noisily in the corridors, the guards were talking loudly.

Eleven o'clock was sounded by the old clock; the prisoner began his song:

"Diogene
Sous ton manteau,
Libre et content——"

He did not finish the third line; the slight sound caused by the fragment of bread as it fell upon the stone floor made him pause suddenly.

Lecoq, at the opening in the ceiling above, was holding his breath, and watching with all his eyes.

He did not miss a single movement of the prisoner—not so much as the quiver of an eyelid.

May looked first at the window, then all about him, as if it were impossible for him to explain the arrival of this projectile.

It was not until some little time had elapsed that he decided to pick it up. He held it in the hollow of his hand, and examined it with apparent curiosity. His features expressed the most profound surprise. One would have sworn that he was innocent of all complicity.

Soon a smile appeared upon his lips. With a slight shrug of the shoulders, which might be interpreted: "Am I a fool?" and with a rapid movement, he broke open the morsel of bread. The sight of the paper which it contained seemed to amaze him.

"What does all this mean?" wondered Lecoq.

The prisoner had opened the note, and was examining, with knitted brows, the figures which were apparently destitute of all meaning to him.

Then suddenly he rushed to the door of his cell, and, hammering upon it with his fists, he cried:

"Here! guard! here!"

A keeper came running, in answer to the summons. Lecoq heard his footsteps in the corridor.

"What do you want?" the man cried, through the opening in the cell door.

"I wish to speak to the judge."

"Very well. He shall be informed."

"Immediately, if you please. I wish to make some revelations."

"He shall be sent for immediately."

Lecoq waited to hear no more.

He tore down the narrow staircase leading from the loft, and rushed to the Palais de Justice to tell M. Segmuller what had happened.

"What can this mean?" he wondered, as he went. "Are we indeed approaching a *dénouement?* This much is certain, the prisoner was not deceived by my note. He could decipher it only with the aid of his volume of 'Béranger'; he has not touched the book, therefore he has not read the note."

M. Segmuller was no less amazed than the young detective. Together they hastened to the prison, followed by the clerk, who was the judge's inevitable shadow.

They had reached the end of the *galerie d'instruction,* when they encountered the keeper, who was coming all in a flutter, greatly excited by that important word, "revelation."

The worthy official undoubtedly wished to make known his opinion; but the judge checked him by saying:

"I know all about it; and I am coming."

When they had reached the narrow corridor leading to the secret cells, Lecoq passed on in advance of the rest of the party.

He said to himself that by stealing upon him unawares, he might possibly find the prisoner engaged in surreptitiously reading the note; and that, in any case, he would have an opportunity to glance at the interior of the cell.

May was seated by the table, his head resting upon his hands.

At the grating of the bolt, drawn by the hand of the head keeper himself, he rose, smoothed his hair, and remained standing in a respectful attitude, apparently waiting for the visitors to address him.

"Did you send for me?" inquired the judge.

"Yes, Monsieur."

"You have, I understand, some revelation to make to me."

"I have something of importance to tell you."

"Very well! these gentlemen will retire."

M. Segmuller had already turned to Lecoq and the keeper to request them to withdraw, when a movement from the prisoner checked his words.

"It is not necessary," May remarked; "I am, on the contrary, very well pleased to speak before everybody."

"Speak, then."

May did not oblige him to repeat the order. He assumed a three-quarters position, inflated his chest, threw his head back, as he had done from the very beginning of his examinations when he wished to make a display of his eloquence.

"It shall be for you to say, gentlemen, whether I am or am not an honest man. The profession matters little. One can, perhaps, be the clown of a travelling show, and yet be an honest man—a man of honour."

"Oh, spare us your reflections!"

"Very well, Monsieur, that suits me exactly. To be brief, then, here is a little paper which was thrown into my cell a few moments ago. There are numbers upon it which may mean something; but I have examined it, and it is all Greek to me."

He handed it to the judge, and added:

"It was rolled up in a bit of bread."

The violence of this unexpected blow struck his visitors dumb; but the prisoner, without seeming to notice the effect he had produced, continued:

"I suppose that the person who threw it made a mistake in the window. I know very well that it is a mean piece of business to denounce a companion in prison. It is cowardly; and one is very likely to get himself into trouble; but a man must be prudent, when he is accused of being an assassin as I am, and when he is threatened with a great unpleasantness."

A terribly significant gesture of severing the head from the body left no doubt whatever of what he meant by an unpleasantness.

"And yet I am innocent," he murmured.

The judge, by this time, had recovered the full possession of his faculties. He concentrated in one glance all the power of his will, and, looking intently at the prisoner:

"You lie!" he said, slowly; "it was for you that this note was intended."

"For me! Then I must be the greatest of fools, or why should I have called you to show it to you? For me? In that case, why did I not keep it? Who knew, who could know that I had received it?"

All this was said with such a marvellous semblance of honesty, his gaze was so frank and open, his voice rang so true, his reasoning was so specious, that the keeper's doubts returned.

"And what if I could prove that you are uttering a falsehood?" insisted M. Segmuller. "What if I could prove it, here and now?"

"You would be the liar! Oh! Monsieur, pardon! Excuse me; I mean——"

But the judge was not in a frame of mind to stickle for nicety of expression.

He motioned May to be silent; and, turning to Lecoq, he said:

"Show the prisoner that you have discovered the key to his secret correspondence."

A sudden change passed over the features of the accused.

"Ah! it is this agent of police who has found it," he said, in an altered tone. "The same agent who assures me that I am a *grand seigneur*."

He turned disdainfully to Lecoq, and added:

"Under these circumstances, there is no help for me. When the police are absolutely determined that a man shall be guilty, it will be proved that he is guilty; everybody knows that. And when a prisoner receives no letters, an agent, who wishes such to be the case, knows how to send them to him."

There was such an expression of contempt upon the prisoner's face that Lecoq could scarcely refrain from making an angry reply.

He restrained this desire, however, in obedience to a warning gesture from the judge, and, taking from the table the volume of Béranger, he endeavoured to prove to the prisoner that each number in the note corresponded to a word on the page indicated, and that all these words formed an intelligible whole.

This overpowering evidence did not seem to trouble May in the least. After expressing the same admiration for this novel system of correspondence that a child would show for a new toy, he declared his belief that no one could equal the police in such machinations.

What could one do in the face of such obstinacy?

M. Segmuller did not even attempt to argue the point, and retired, followed by his companions.

Until they reached the superintendent's office, he did not utter a word; then he threw himself down into an arm-chair, saying:

"We must confess ourselves beaten. This man will always remain what he is now—an enigma."

"But what is the meaning of the comedy he has just played? I do not understand it," said the keeper.

"Why," responded Lecoq, "do you not see that he hoped to persuade the judge that the first note had been written by me, in order to convince him of the truth of my theory? It was a hazardous project; but the importance of the result to be gained must have emboldened him to attempt it. Had he succeeded, I should have been disgraced; and he would have remained May—without further molestation, in the eyes of the world. But how could he know that I had discovered his correspondence, and that I was watching him from the loft above? That is something which will never be explained, probably."

The keeper and the detective exchanged glances of mutual distrust.

"Eh! eh!" thought the director, "why, indeed, might not that note which fell at my feet the other day have been the work of this crafty fellow? His Father Absinthe might have served him in the first instance as well as he did in the last."

"Who knows," Lecoq was saying to himself, "but what this worthy keeper has confided everything to Gevrol? If he has, my jealous general would not scruple to play me such a trick as this."

"Ah!" exclaimed Goquet, "it is really a pity that such a well-mounted comedy did not succeed."

These words startled the judge from his revery.

"A shameful farce," he said, "and one that I would never have authorized, had I not been blinded by a mad longing to arrive at the truth. It brings the sacred majesty of justice into contempt to make her the accomplice of such base subterfuges!"

Lecoq, on hearing these words, became white with wrath, and a tear of rage glittered in his eye.

It was the second affront within an hour. Insulted, first by the prisoner, afterward by the judge.

"I am defeated," thought he. "I must confess it. It is Fate. Ah! if I had but succeeded!"

Disappointment alone had impelled M. Segmuller to utter these harsh words; they were harsh and unjust; he regretted them, and did all in his power to make Lecoq forget them.

For they met every day after this unfortunate incident; and every morning, when the young detective came to give an account of his investigations, they had a long conference.

For Lecoq still continued his efforts; still laboured with an obstinacy intensified by constant sneers; still pursued his investigations with that cold and determined anger which keeps one's faculties on the alert for years.

But the judge was utterly discouraged.

"We must abandon this attempt," said he. "All the means of detection have been exhausted. I give it up. The prisoner will go to the Court of Assizes, and will be acquitted or condemned under the name of May. I will trouble myself no more about the affair."

He *said* this, but his anxiety, the disappointment caused by his defeat, the sarcastic remarks of his acquaintances, and his perplexity in regard to the course he had best pursue, so affected his health that he became really ill—so ill that he was confined to his bed.

Eight days had elapsed since he had left his house, when one morning Lecoq called to inquire for him.

"You see, my good fellow, that this mysterious murderer is fatal to us judges. Ah! he is too much for us; he will preserve his identity."

"Possibly," replied Lecoq. "There is but one way left to gain his secret: we must allow him to escape, and then track him to his lair."

(*To be continued*)

The Morrows

By CHARLES RIVIÈRE DUFRESNY

PHYLLIS, greedier far than kind,
  When Sylvander pray'd for this,
Required of her faithful herd
  Thirty sheep for one short kiss.

The morrow, and the shepherd thought
  Phyllis kind—the bargain cheap,
For from the shepherdess he bought
  Thirty kisses for one sheep.

The morrow, Phyllis, far more tender,
  Trembling she would lose her bliss,
Was very happy to surrender
  Thirty sheep for one short kiss.

The morrow, Phyllis, nearly mad,
  Found her flock a bribe too small
To buy the kiss the fickle lad
  Gave Lisette for naught at all.

"Dinner in" or "dinner out"—

your gums suffer from the food you eat today

THE FOOD we eat, and the hasty way we eat it, are greatly to blame for the weakened condition of our gums.

The trouble with this food can be summed up simply. It's too soft, too quickly mastered, to give the gums the massage which is the normal effect of hard, fibrous food. Lacking this stimulation, the gums grow soft and flabby—they bleed easily, and thus weakened, they are the sooner subject to the stubborn troubles which attack the teeth through the gums.

What you can do to keep your gums healthy

You cannot always control your diet, but you can provide, in a minute or two a day, the stimulation and exercise which your gums need so much.

Dental authorities everywhere are preaching the care of the gums. Thousands of them, to whom Ipana has been demonstrated, recommend it as an important part of the plan.

Many of them order a daily massage with Ipana after the ordinary cleaning with Ipana and the brush.

For Ipana not only cleanses teeth safely, but tones and strengthens weak and understimulated gum tissue.

This it can do because of the presence of ziratol, an antiseptic hemostatic, used by the profession to allay bleeding and to restore gum tissue to its normal tonicity.

Switch to Ipana for 1 month!

Despite the coupon on this page, the best thing to do is to get a large tube at the drug store today. Try this delicious dentifrice for one month. A full-size tube, which will last for a hundred brushings, will show you the start of firmer, harder, healthier gums and a clean, sweet and wholesome mouth.

IPANA TOOTH PASTE

—made by the makers of Sal Hepatica

HEALS
LEEDING
GUMS
PANA
TH PASTE
TOL-MYERS CO
W YORK

BRISTOL-MYERS CO.
Dept. X-65
42 Rector Street, New York, N. Y.

Kindly send me a trial tube of IPANA TOOTH PASTE without charge or obligation on my part.

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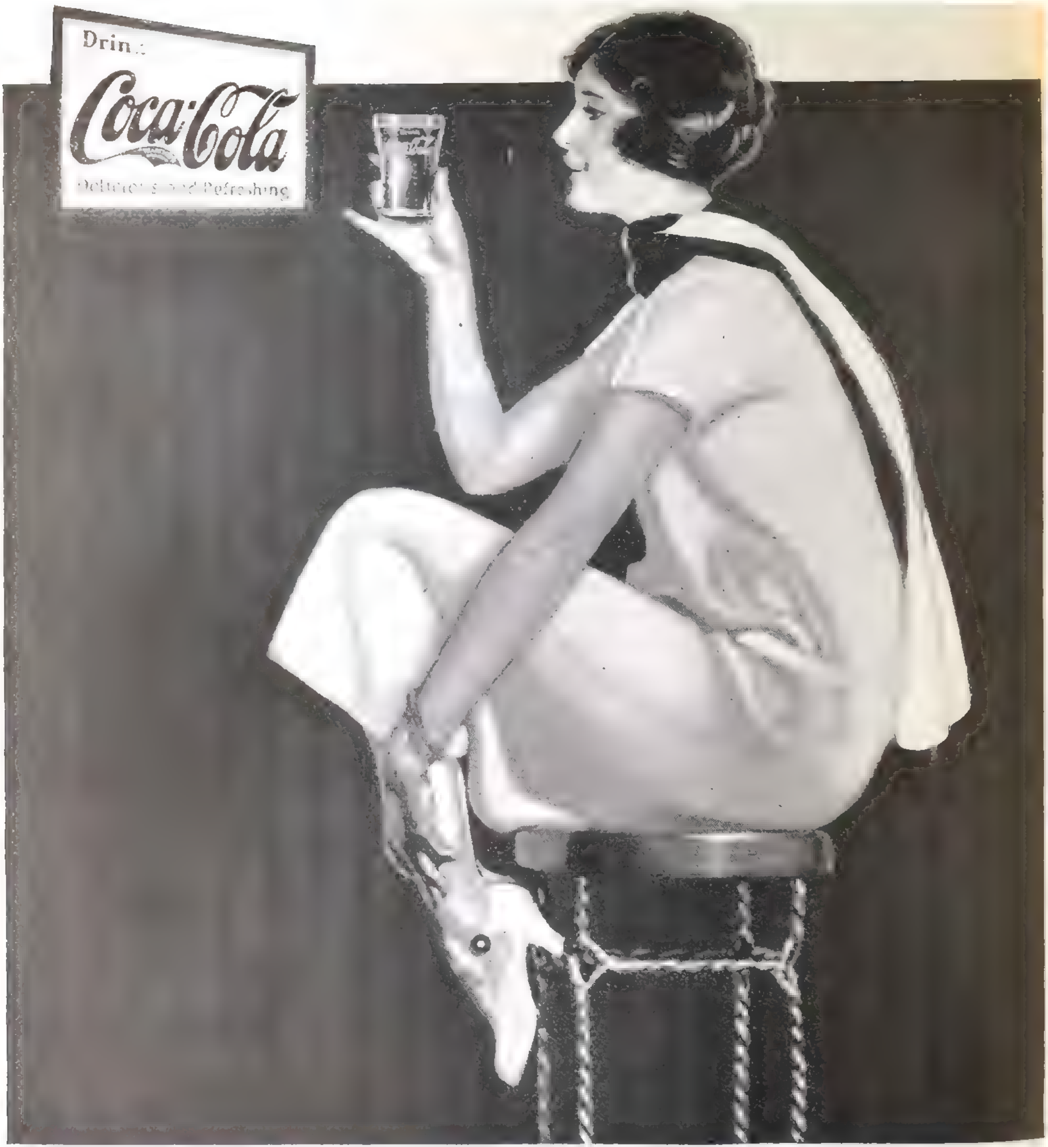
Address . . . .

City . . . . *State* . . . .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Coca-Cola
Delicious and Refreshing

The Coca-Cola Company, Atlanta, Ga.

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TWENTY YEARS OF SUCCESS

to Its Credit Can Do for You

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The life - prolonging service of the Company's Health Bureau benefits policyholders and helps also to keep insurance cost down.

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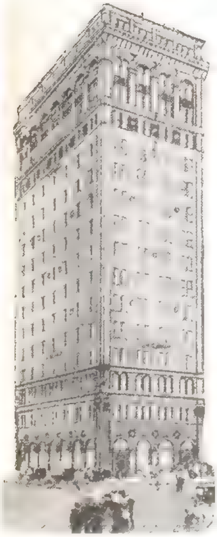

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Call at the Company's office, or simply use the Coupon, or write and say, "Mail me insurance information as mentioned in The Golden Book Magazine" and in your letter be sure to give

1. **Your full name;**
2. **Your occupation;**
3. **Exact date of your birth.**

When your inquiry reaches us no agent will be sent to visit you. We desire to cooperate with you directly, and have you think out with us your problems from official documentary matter submitted. Because we employ no agents the resultant commission savings go to you.

G B 6-

Postal Life Insurance Company
511 Fifth Ave., New York

Without obligating me, please send full i
surance particulars for my age.

Name . . . .

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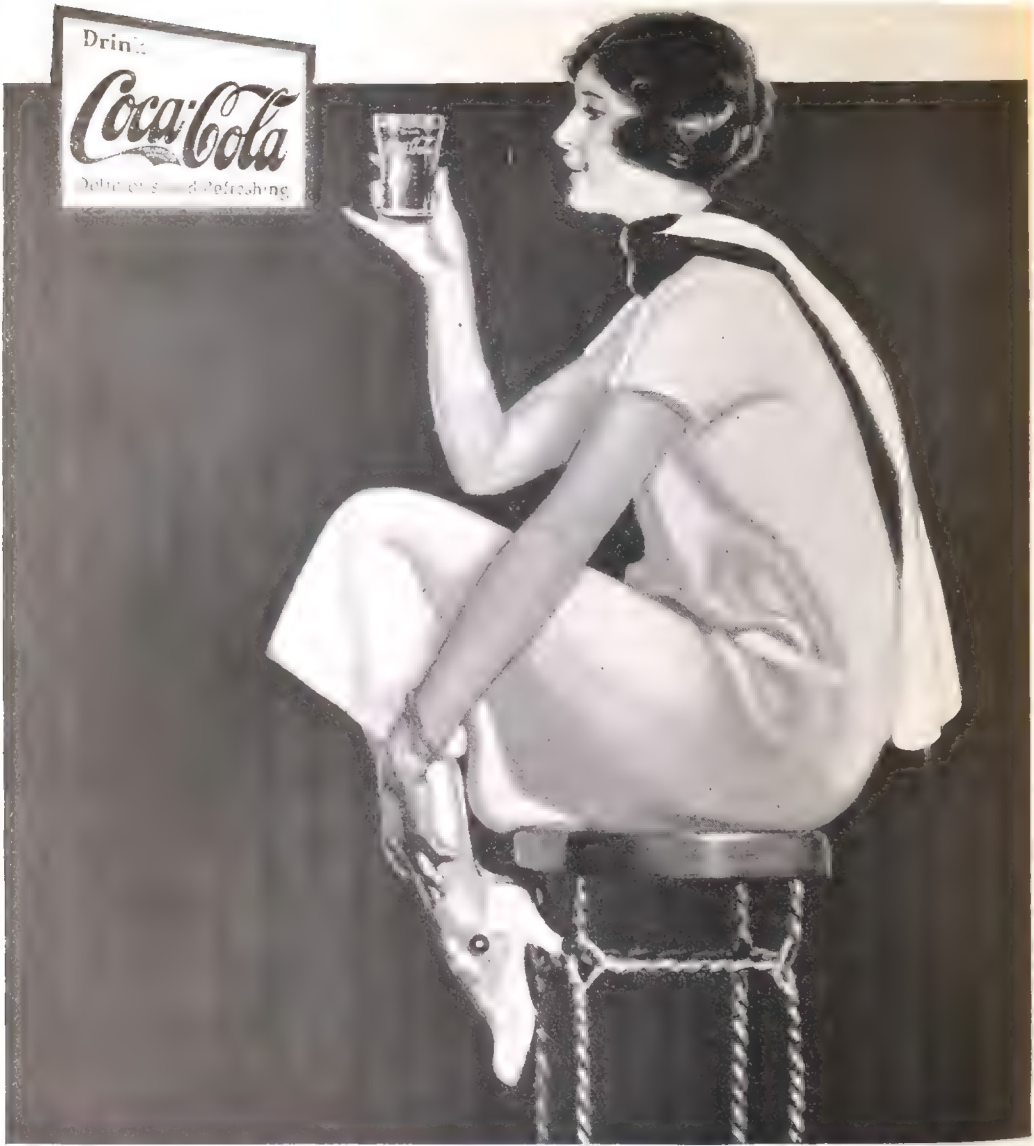
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You'll find a wonderful girl in a real American pose ~ at the soda fountain When thirsty remember her. ~ ~

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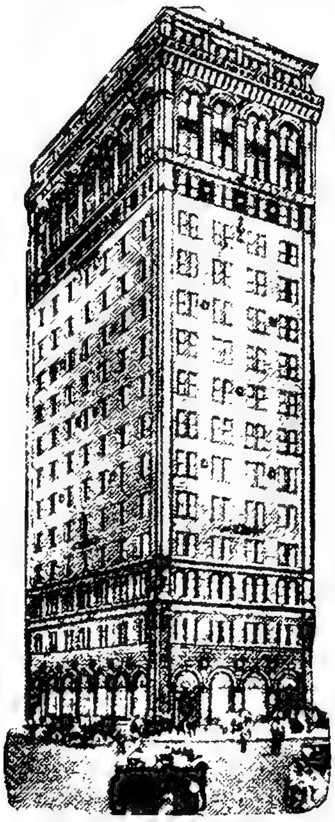
Standard policy provisions, approved by the New York State Insurance Department.

Operates under strict requirements of New York State and subject to the United States postal authorities everywhere.

High medical standards in the selection of risks.

Payment of premiums monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually, optional with the policyholder at any time.



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1. **Your full name;**
2. **Your occupation;**
3. **Exact date of your birth.**

When your inquiry reaches us no agent will be sent to visit you. We desire to cooperate with you directly, and have you think out with us your problems from official documentary matter submitted. Because we employ no agents the resultant commission savings go to you.

POSTAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
Wm. R. Malone, President
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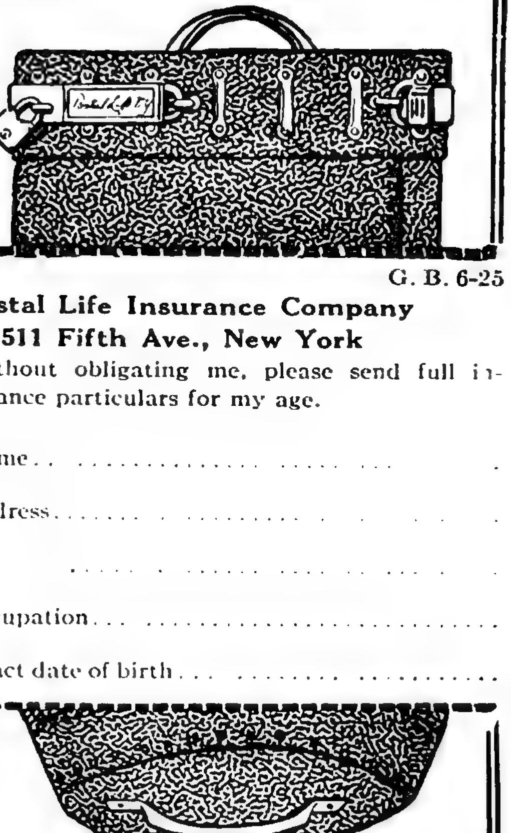

G. B. 6-25

Postal Life Insurance Company
511 Fifth Ave., New York

Without obligating me, please send full insurance particulars for my age.

Name ....

Address ....

....

Occupation ....

Exact date of birth ....

Residence of R. C. Proctor, Rye, N. Y. H. N. Woolsey, Architect, New York City

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YOU can be just as comfortable inside your house in January as you are outside it in June. Just as comfortable and just as healthy. It's all a matter of that heater in your cellar.

Think of your heater *now*, and you'll think of it less when the icy winds begin to whistle around the corner. If your present heating system isn't giving you the comfort, the health, the economy of Kelsey Health Heat—it will pay you to tear it out and install a Kelsey Warm Air Generator.

There are scientific reasons why the Kelsey with its constant circulation of moist, *fresh* air, brings June into your home in January—and why it does it with *less coal.* Scientific reasons—simply explained—that you should know.

Send for the booklet, "Kelsey Achievements." It may open your eyes to some common-sense heating facts. They'll be doubly interesting next January when the coal bin cries for a little attention.

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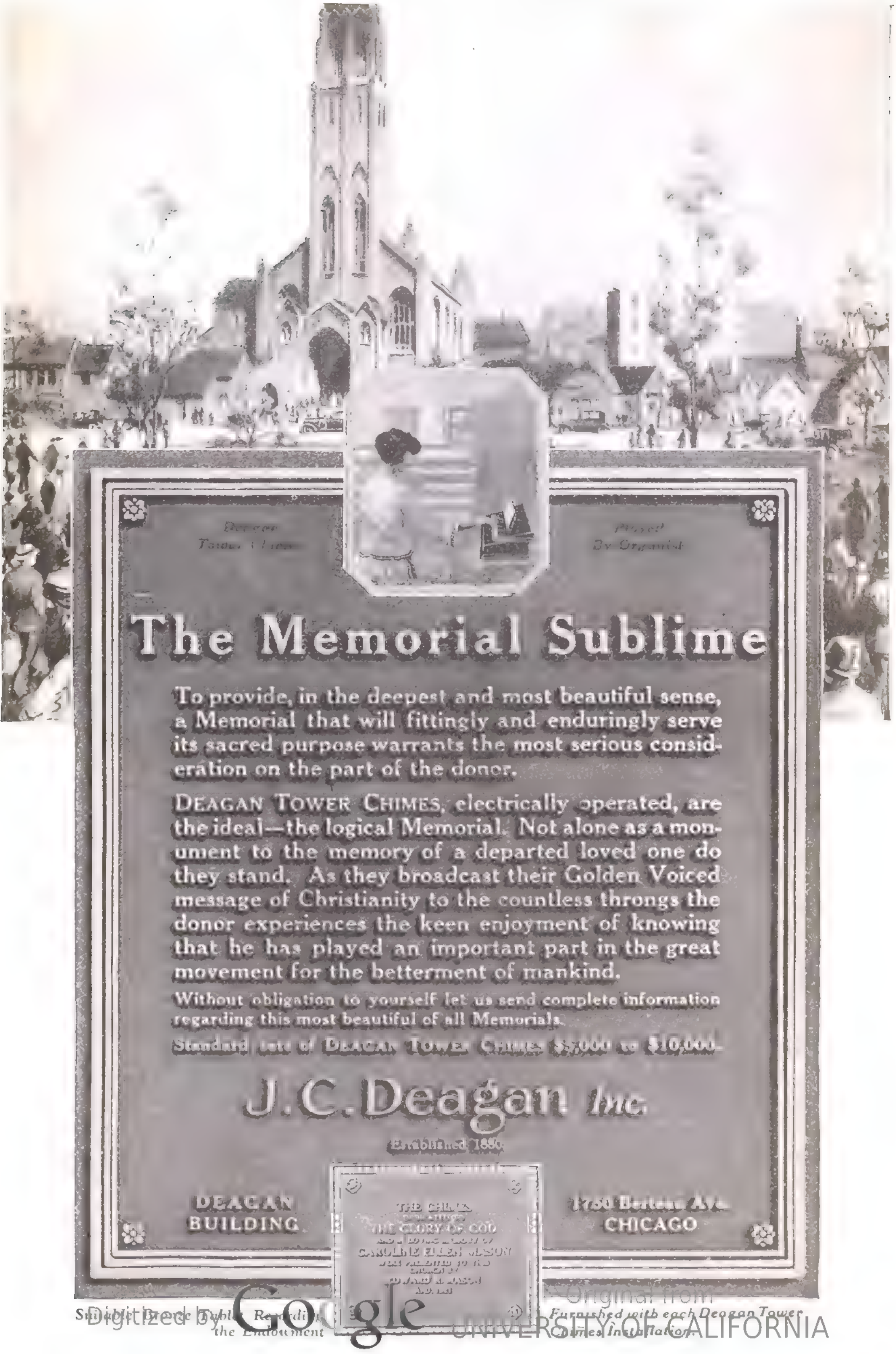

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DEAGAN TOWER CHIMES, electrically operated, are the ideal—the logical Memorial. Not alone as a monument to the memory of a departed loved one do they stand. As they broadcast their Golden Voiced message of Christianity to the countless throngs the donor experiences the keen enjoyment of knowing that he has played an important part in the great movement for the betterment of mankind.

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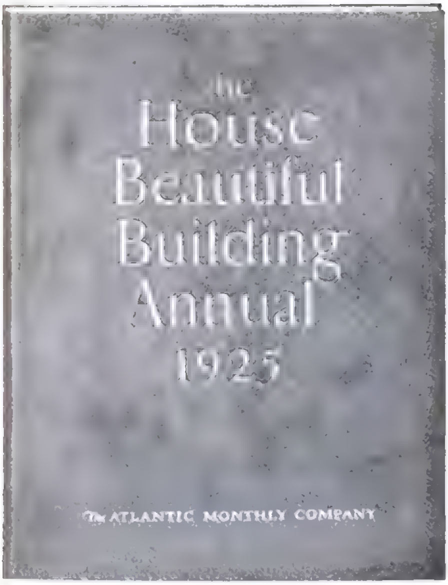
The House Beautiful Building Annual 1925
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That is why Chamberlin maintains this nationwide organization with sales and service in more than 80 cities. Chamberlin's own experts plan, fit and install all Chamberlin Metal Weather Strips. It is an absolutely necessary service to the continued satisfaction of weatherstrip users.

Because Chamberlin knows installations are correctly made by Chamberlin experts, it guarantees all installations for the life of the building. Any need for attention on any Chamberlin installation, no matter how many years hence, will be promptly and cheerfully given.

These typical letters reproduced here show how important users regard proper installation by trained, courteous and considerate workmen.

Have Chamberlin Installed Now— Before Winter Comes Again

Avoid the rush of the Fall season. The purchase of Chamberlin now will protect your home against the dust and grime of Summer. Your protection will be available with the advent of the winter and rainy season. No rattling windows. No draughts. No rain leakage. A saving of from 25% to 40% on fuel costs.

CHAMBERLIN
METAL WEATHER STRIPS
"SINCE 1893-THE STANDARD"

and Door Bottoms

Chamberlin Door Bottoms enable you to admit fresh air to any part of the house while closing all other parts against draughts. They prevent circulation of cold air, dust and dirt from basements. Keep out laundry and kitchen steam and odors. Operate automatically. Do not interfere with rugs. They are inexpensive, installed separately or in conjunction with Chamberlin Metal Weather Strips.

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"No Wear in 20 Years"

"It is now about twenty years since your metal weather strips were put on my house at 95 Shanley Avenue and I take great pleasure in letting you know that they have given complete satisfaction. They show no sign of wear and a loose or rattling window is unknown in our house."

Very truly yours,
(Signed) Arthur J. Gude,
Gude & Cole, Inc.,
74 Clinton St., Newark, N. J.

"Exceptionally Fine Installation"

"I made a very careful investigation of weather stripping before placing this contract and while your price was somewhat higher than had been quoted by others, I am convinced that your product, in conjunction with the exceptionally fine work in installation, is well worth the slight additional cost."

Very truly yours,
(Signed) H. C. Moran,
Keystone Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Send the Coupon

Chamberlin Metal Weather Strip Co.,
1643 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Mich.

I would like an estimate covering the cost of installing (check which)

Chamberlin Inside Door Bottoms—

Chamberlin Metal Weather Strips—in my home—Office Bldg.—Church—Number of Windows—Number of Doors—

Name . . . .

Address . . . .

City and State . . . .
Eng. Dept. E-3.

Weigh what you want

Are you too fat? Are you too thin?

She doesn't GUESS— She KNOWS

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Here is the scientific way to Weight Control! Reduce your weight—or build it up easily and safely this new way—

Two Things Necessary Here They Are!

IF YOU are too stout you can reduce 20, 30, 40 or more pounds without starvation diets, without strenuous exercises, without drugs. If you are too thin you can build up your body to beautiful, graceful, lovely lines without drugs or other disagreeable methods.

Two things are necessary—The HEALTH-O-METER Automatic Bathroom Scale and our SYSTEM OF WEIGHT CONTROL. This System, scientifically prepared and authorized by eminent medical authorities, makes weight control easy. It is simple, pleasant and safe. The results are simply amazing.

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What Science Now Knows

Science is daily making strides. Old ideas are out of date. New and better methods are replacing them. A new science of weight control has developed It will do wonders for you. Let us tell you about it and how to reduce your weight, or how to build it up. Ask for it FREE.

Write For This FREE BOOK

Write for our FREE BOOK "Weigh What You Want," it will tell you what you want to know about weight control. Send no money. Just the coupon below. State if you want to reduce or build weight.

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Please mail me free and postpaid your book "Weigh What You Want." This in no way obligates me.

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Please check for our guidance

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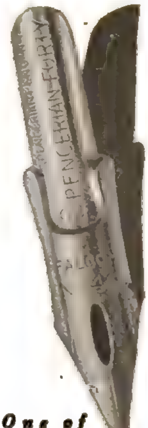

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Underwear **MUNSING Wear** *Hosiery*

Munsingwear is now obtainable in hosiery as well as in union suits. The hosiery line comprises an exceptionally large assortment of numbers in the wanted colors and materials in styles for men, women, children, infants, and is already recognized by the trade as one of the great hosiery lines of the country. Thousands of Munsingwear dealers have already put Munsingwear hosiery in stock and are selling the hosiery with the same confidence they have always had in selling Munsingwear union suits.

When buying your Munsingwear union suits, ask your dealer to show you samples of Munsingwear hosiery. You will find the same fine quality and workmanship in the hosiery that for so many years have characterized all under garments bearing the Munsingwear trade mark symbol.

Munsingwear Quality Assures Comfort and Service

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ALBRIGHT
TOOTH BRUSH
A PRODUCT OF
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Really Cleans *ALL* the Teeth!

4,118 dentists designed, and 20,000 dentists now endorse, the ALBRIGHT TOOTHBRUSH to reach the places *usually never reached—between* the teeth, on the *uneven grinding surfaces*, the *backs* of the *back teeth*. The tufts of bristles are *wedge-shaped* and *widely spaced*. They penetrate into *every crevice*.

The Albrig

is *different* in design
different in results.

45¢ 35¢ 25¢

Handles in *five* distinctive colors for quick identification of *your* toothbrush—White, Light Amber, Dark Amber, Ruby, Blue.

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Send coupon for free paper piano pattern

It plainly shows that a Brambach Baby Grand, with all its beauty of line and of tone, requires no more space in your home than an upright piano. We will also send collection of Brambach illustrations. Simply mail coupon to us today.

BRAMBACH

$635 *and up* BABY GRAND *f. o. b. N. Y.*

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BRAMBACH PIANO CO.
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Please send me paper pattern showing size of the Brambach Baby Grand.

Name...

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WESTERN TRIP

IN BUYING YOUR WESTERN ROUND TRIP TICKET, it's easy to include the great scenic "YTS" TOUR of Yosemite National Park, in California, on sale by all railroad ticket agents.

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Write today for free Illustrated Descriptive Folder, Address

YOSEMITE PARK AND
CURRY CO.
Dept. G. Yosemite, Calif.

Golden Ways
To
Golden Places

Our American Cathay

THE soul who, as he reads these lines, vibrates in perfect tune with Richard Hovey—

> I am fevered with the sunset,
>   I am fretful with the bay,
> For the wander-thirst is on me
>   And my soul is in Cathay,

is 100 per cent. normal! The wonder would be if he *didn't* feel like that!

Cathay, Cathay! After all it is not a place but a "happy hunting ground" of no latitude or longitude. And more and more we discover that the American Continent has now developed means to see "Cathay" in an astounding variety of color and kind. Many of us have known for years that America possessed gorgeous scenery of every description, which need not bow the knee to any other land; but we have left it to intrepid explorers, hunters and toughened campers because we preferred to travel with our families amid comfortable hostelries.

Today we have remarkably complete facilities for comfort right in the very midst of our most entrancing national beauty spots. We have even hundreds of miles of perfect automobile roads amidst our primitive national parks, with modern American "room with bath" at the end of the day's journeys!

Ponder over the advice of Fuller:

"Know most of the rooms of thy native country before thou goest over the threshold thereof." (In blunt Americanese, "See America first!") add to that the epigram of Goldoni:

"A wise traveler never despises his own country" and we have—if they are necessary—good texts for my preachment to plan a visit to one or more of our National Parks this season. The word "park" is a trifle unfortunate, perhaps, for our city-bred idea of parks is entirely out of keeping. Think of Yellowstone with its petrified forests, many-colored canyons, geysers and hot springs. Think of Yosemite, colossal chasm of vast precipices in the high Sierras of California, with great waterfalls, towering spires and domes of stone. Think of the Grand Canyon of Arizona with its ten to twenty-mile wide rift a mile deep in the face of the earth, with the Colorado River roaring at the bottom;—making one think of the lines in Homer—

> One who journeying
> Along a way he knows not, having crossed
> A place of drear extent, before him sees
> A river rushing swiftly toward the deep,
> And all its tossing current white with foam;
> And stops and turns, and measures back his way.

Think, too, of Glacier National Park, Mount Rainier Park and Rocky Mountain National Park, each with many glaciers and snow-covered peaks, with hundreds of varieties of beautiful wild flowers in bloom far up on their slopes.

And in southern Utah, the splendors of Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon and Cedar Breaks.

Even then we have still to think of Alaska and of the Canadian Rockies, each with grandeur not possible for those who have never seen it to get from a mere printed page. As ex-President Harding said of Alaska, "It brings upon one a new conception of the mightiness of creation, and proves Nature's plan of blending might and magnificence." Mountains are there which doubly deserve Byron's lines,

> On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds
> With a diadem of snow.

Indeed it is difficult for a traveled American, who has seen the length and breadth of his country's natural beauty, to refrain from making invidious comparisons. There is such a great quantity and lavishness of it. If, as Ruskin said, "Mountains are the beginning and the end of all natural scenery," then certainly America has enough of every type, shape, height, color and composition to satisfy the most critical. Moreover, she can supply them with a background and foreground of desert, forest, river, sea, lake and foothill, to say nothing of arctic or tropical climate, with all the shades between.

Alaska—which people think is very cold, but which grows vegetables galore, and strawberries as big as a man's fist—is a place which the knowing travelers are discovering. As a sea trip it is "one breath-catch after another." The "Inside Passage" for instance traverses smooth water for 2,000 miles through endless isles. Think of sitting on a comfortable steamer chair and watching snow-covered mountains glide by and see glaciers meet the shore, watch waterfalls and cascades—

(*Continued on page* [illegible])

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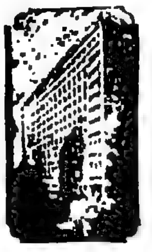

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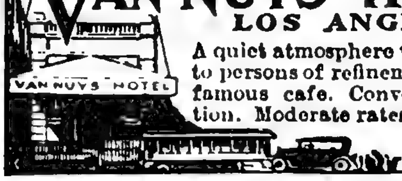

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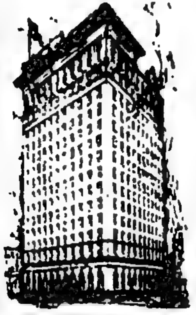

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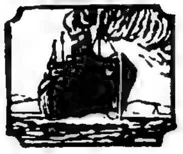

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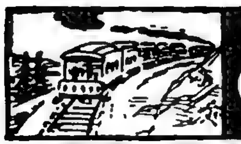

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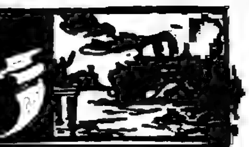

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(Continued from page 45)

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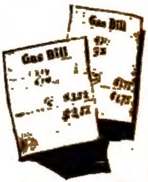
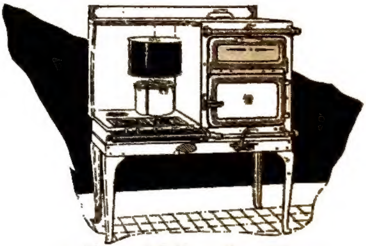
As it cooks with the heat wasted through radiation by the ordinary range, the Chambers makes your kitchen cool and pleasant, as well as efficient. Once the gas is turned off, you are free to leave your house for entire afternoons with the knowledge that your return will find your dinner deliciously cooked, and ready for serving. There is no danger of burning or overcooking—and meals keep warm indefinitely. With the Chambers Range you become the perfect mistress of one thousand extra hours a year of freedom from kitchen drudgery.

Scientific Approval



The saving on Gas Bills Helps to Pay for a Chambers.

The Chambers Range is publicly endorsed by the four leading domestic science institutes. With it you can do anything that can be done with any other modern gas range. But no other range can offer the special advantages of the patented Chambers Features. Our convenient payment plan and the big saving on gas bills make it easy for you to replace your present equipment with a Chambers Range. There is a model, finished in all white, or black and white, that exactly meets your requirements.



An Object of Pride in Every Home.

Free Booklet

Our booklet "Cook with the Gas Turned Off" explains in detail what a Chambers Range can mean to you in better cooking, freedom, efficiency, and economy. Just mail us today the coupon below.

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There is a distinct reason why there has been a big mprovement in the quality of all canned goods. It is he *exact control of heating processes.* *Tycos* Temperature Controlling, Recording and Regulating Instruments—the Sixth Sense of Industry—makes possible the production on a large scale of cooked products of an absolutely uniform quality.

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MANUFACTURERS

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